

A
METHOD
AND
INSTRUCTIONS
for the Art of
Divine Meditation,
WITH
Instances of the several
Kindes of Solemne
MEDITATION.

By *Thomas White*, late Minister
of Gods Word in *London*.

The second Edition.

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THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,



*OUR Active Souls
can no more for-
bear to think, then
the Eye can chuse
but see when it is
open ; and we being accoun-
table*

To the Reader.

table to God for thoughts (he being the searcher and judge of them) it would be our wisdom and security to improve all means for the Spirituallizing of them. 'Tis charged upon no less penalty then damnation, for Jerusalem to purge her self from vain thoughts.

*The Meditating Mind is the beginner of all Goodness. On the Sinners part, it is the Rise of his Returning unto God, Ezek. 18. 28. In Saints, and Persons Converted, it is the way to a Progressive Conversion, and Renewing Repentance, Psal. 119. 59. I considered my wayes and
turn-*

To the Reader.

turned ; the more consideration, the more conversion ; Mens bold and eager pursuite in Sin, is greatly from want of consideration, Jer. 8. 6. Even in a Nation when God intends to work Great Returnings, he stirs up great bethinkings, 1 King. 8. 47. If they shall bethink themselves. He minds them of considering to bring them to returning. In Nature Rational, the first Mover is the Mind by consideration ; In Grace, the first mover is the Mind, by Meditation, Luke 15. 17. And when the Soul is returned to God, Oh how sweet are the Meditations of him! The sweetness

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To the Reader.

ness thereof is better felt then
expressed; thereby the Christian
doth improve his knowledge,
quicken his affections, and ex-
cite practice.

He that hath the Grace and
skill to be alwayes communing
with God, or his own Heart,
will never want Work or Com-
pany, never need he complain
of Solitariness, or tedious
Hours, for there is no time
wherein there is not some great
business to be done between God
and him.

A pious heart by meditati-
on is least alone, when most a-
lone; his God with him, and he
with God, are good company.

He

To the Reader.

He is doing the most and best business when he is imployed with his God about his own and other mens Soules.

It was the great Design of the Reverend and holy Author Mr. Tho. White, at first in publishing this small Treatise, to help Christians forward in this so advantageous and heavenly Duty. A few Pages of Manuscript are inserted which he left behind him for that purpose, if it came to be re-printed.

All that knew the Author, honoured and loved him. He was a Burning and Shining Light; he was too Bright

To the Reader.

a Star to shine longer in the
Terrestrial World; God made
use of him to turn many
unto Righteousnesse, and
now he is gone to shine in
the Kingdome of his Fa-
ther.

Reader, If thou beest un-
skilful in the Duty of Medita-
tion, here thou mayest be di-
rected; If thou beest back-
ward in Performance, here
thou mayst be quickned;
The Instances here given ar-
gue such a holy Heart in
him that used them, that
it will be much thy own fault
if they doe not make thy
Heart who perusest them,
if

To the Reader.

*if it be bad, good, and if
it be good, better: that it
may doe so, shall be the
prayers of*

R.A.

A Method

London

of the said goods, and if
it be found, then it
shall be the

R. A.

Witness



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A METHOD
OR
INSTRUCTIONS
for the Art of
Divine Meditation.

*Pfal. 1. 2: But his delight is in the
Law of the Lord, and in his Law
he doth meditate day and night.*

CHAP. I.

An Introduction to the fol-
lowing Discourse.



Book wherein the Lives
of the most Eminent
Saints were written, would
be the delight of Saints
to read. Yet to read of the wonder-
ful discoveries God hath mad of
himself

himself to dying Saints ; to hear the wonderful things that such Souls filled with extasies of Love and Joy, do speak, is sweet as the honey and the honey-combe ; it seemes to realize Heaven unto us.

To hear a dying Saint just as entering into Heaven saying blessed be God I am arrived safe to glory : The gates of Heaven stand wide open for me, and Christ stands with stretched out Arms to receive me, blessed be God for free Grace, blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

To hear another as he was on his sick bed expounding *Mr. Holland.* *Rom. 8.* he stopped and said, what light is this I see ? They about him said it is the Sunshine, nay said he it is my Saviours shine. I doubt not but you all see this Light ; but I feel a light within me which no one of you all can know, and turning himself to the Minister that Preached his Funeral Sermon, he said

said this night I dye, and speak this from me, I speak it confidently that God dealeth familiarly with man, I feel his Mercy, I see his Majelty, *Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God bekn* ~~oweth~~; I see things that are unutterable, and with many ~~such~~ like speeches he ended his life. So it is no less delightful to hear the ravishing speeches of Martyrs crying out with clapping of hands saying, O you Papists, you talk of Miracles here is a Miracle, I feel no more pain in the midst of these torments then if I was upon a bed of Roses.

Another though in desertion to that very time, yet when come to the Stake, he cryed out, *O he is come, he is come whom my soul loved.*

Yet to have an opportunity to hear one of the eminentest Saints in the World in their secret addresses unto God, is not less desireable

then the former, when Saints pray with others they refrain from several expressions, for fear of scandal, either of pride, or hypocrisie: There is that ~~was~~ ^{known} that liberty of speech in secret, which is not lawful if possible to be uttered, except by a Soul in secret, when no one heareth but God alone. To hear a poor soul in desertion bemoaning it self like *Ephraim*, to hear it fetch such sighs and groans for one glympse of Gods smiling countenance, such sighs and groanes I say as never any one yet heard the sorrowfullest in the world fetch for the loss of a dying, or new dead friend, or child, or Husband: nay such groanes as never any in the agonies of death, or in the midst of the greatest torments ever fetched: O how you would be affected to hear such sighs and such groanes as some of the people of God fetch, and such sighs they have, *Rom. 8. 26.* they might and were actually expressed, if indulgent

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Parents had them when they dyed, or men in torment had any equal to them. But the Holy Ghost saith that he helpeth the infirmities of his people with sighs and groanes that cannot be expressed. To hear a man sigh as if his heart would break because he could not enjoy the ordinances of God, Oh how would it make one say, alas alas ! I was never thus affected because I could not enjoy the Ordinances of God

1. Oh how would it have affected you could you have heard *David* in his secret addressees unto God; See how affectionately he speaketh in the 119. *Psalme* and the 20th verse, *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy Judgment at all times.* This was no strain of Rhetorick, *David* would not lye to the holy Ghost, and tel God his heart was ready to break if it was not, for he well knew God knew his heart; nay for this to be constant

when ever he thought of such things, then for his very soul to break, gives a sufficient testimony to the truth of what I have asserted: Doubtless hypocrites cannot in their actings of love or joy, come up to the real affections of some of Gods people; I say therefore to hear the expressions of Gods people, in their secret addresses unto God, their love-sick pangs in their extasies of joy, were worth our hearing, for they would wonderfully affect. This very thing is done in the book of *Psalms*, where we have *David* writing his secret devotions, for abundance of the *Psalms* are *Dauids* secret addresses unto God upon severall occasions, as by the titles of severall of his *Psalms* doth appear.

CHAP. 2.

A short explanation of the words together with some short Observations upon the same.

BEcause the first Verse is part of the description of the blessed man, and an Introductory also to the following words, I shall speak something to them. The words of the first verse are far more emphatical then they are rendred in our English Translation: For indeed our English Dialect will not bear to be translated exactly according to the Hebrew; but as near as it can be take it thus: *O blessed is the man, or he man, (i. e. whoever he be rich or poor, noble or ignoble) that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful: But his will is in the Law of the Lord, or of Jehovah, and in*

his Law he doth meditate in the day and by the night. Give me leave to gather up the Pearles that lye in the way to the Text.

Let me a little consider the greatness and excellency of the righteous mans blessedness.

He is blessed.

2. He is *blessedness*, made up of blessedness, blessed in his body, blessed in his soul, blessed in health, blessed in sickness, blessed in every state and condition.

3. He is *blessedness*, blessed in the highest degree: For the plural number is sometimes put for the Superlative, or else blessedness signifieth all manner of blessednesses, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; if riches be a blessing, he shall have them; if poverty be a blessing, he shall have that; for sometimes poverty is a blessing, sometimes riches: whatsoever is a blessing he shall have.

4. A Saint is not only blessed, blessed even to admiration.

tion. It is brought in here with an interjection, or note of admiration. *O ! blessedness is the man.*

5. Saints admire the Saints blessedness, and it is no small matter will make the Saints admire: The Glory and happiness of the world, they despise, which the men of the world admire at, and they despise the happiness of the Saints.

6. See the goodness of God, he gives the Saints happiness beyond their understanding. If God should send the Saints a book as large as Heaven, and bid us write down what we would have, we should be losers by the bargain, for the happiness and blessedness of Saints putteth the Saints to a stand, and makes them silent, for admiration is, *Silentium intellectus*. When the understanding perceiveth that there is more in the object then it is able to comprehend, it leaves off making notions of the subject, it then falleth to admiring of it. The Platonists say of God that he is *Unsayable*.

visibile, invifible, by reason of his excellency and abundance of light God may be praised well by many words but better by few, and beft of all by none, but by filence, admiration and extafies of love and indefatigable defire after everlafting enjoyments of him, So I fay of the blessednefs of Saints, furely as *A. dam* in his beft eftate was altogether vanity, *Pfal.* 39. So the Saint the man, whofoever he be, is in his loweft condition altogether blessed: I fhall pafs by the gradation of the words, as walk, ftand, fit, counfel, way, feat, wicked, finner, fcornful, though one may obferve by the way, one groweth wicked by degrees, but I forbear: yet this I fhall obferve from the coherence of thefe words with the former, *viz.* That negative divinity damneth thousands (is is *Luthers* expreffion) though we muft firft ceafe to do evil; before we can do good, yet it is not enough to ceafe to do evil but

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Divine Meditation.

II

we must also do good, for as sins of commission poyson the soul, so sins of omission starve the soul. From that his will is in the law of Jehovah, we may observe, that we should have no will of our own, the Law of God should be our will, if you would know the will of a Saint, you may find it in Gods Law, Saints will is the transcript of the Law written by the finger of God, *Jer. 31. 33. I will put my Law in their inward parts* saith God, *and write in their hearts*, if any would know what a Saint will do in such or such a case, you need not go to ask him, but see what God commandeth, he willeth nothing but what God commandeth, and whatsoever God commandeth is his will.

Further, we may observe, that it is not enough to do holy duties, but we must love holy duties, for the blessed man doth not only keep to the utmost of his power, the

Law, but *delights* in the Law, the Commandments are not grievous but delightful to him. A wicked man though he may pray, yet he loveth it not; a Saint would not for all the world that God should say to him, you shall think so oft of me in a day; it would be a great trouble to a Saint that God should forbid, as it is to a wicked man that God commandeth him to think often. But passing by these I shall choose this observation as the foundation of the following discourse, *viz.* that to meditate upon the word of God, is the essential character and indispenfible duty and constant practice of every one that is a true blessed man; and that this meditation on Scripture may be the easier understood and practised, I shall proceed as followeth.

CHAP. III.

Of the nature, kinds, and differences, of solemn, divine meditation.

Something seemeth necessary to be premised concerning the nature of Meditation, what it is, and how it differeth from other acts of the understanding that seem like it, and how one kind of meditation differeth from another, else this treatise will be defective without it.

First, For the nature or definition of Divine Meditation we may say, that it is a serious solemn thinking and considering of the things of God, to the end we might understand how much they concern us, and that our hearts thereby may be raised to some holy affections and resolutions.

Secondly, Solemn Divine Meditation differeth from occasional meditation.

1. In that occasional meditations are shorter, like ejaculatory prayers which though they are as parenthesis in our worldly employments, yet they signifie more then all the rest of the business we are employed in, but meditation is generally of longer duration then ordinary solemn prayers.

2. Such occasional meditations are things that we have in *transitu*, or by the by; and this that I speak of is a solem set dut y.

Thirdly, The subject from which occasional meditations arise are very frequently things artificial, civil or natural, indeed any thing that we see or hear but the subject of solemn meditation, are only things spiritual;

Thirdly, Solemn Divine Meditation differeth from study.

1. In respect of the subject, wicked men : Study and Godly men meditate, and it may be the former, study more then the godly. Nay it is the very distinguishing Sign between Saints and others. *that they meditate in the Law of God day and night, Psal. 1. 2.* And I believe it is a thing far more rare for a meditating Christian to be an hypocrite, then for a Christian that spendeth much in prayer, especially if it be publick.

2. In respect of the Subject of study; so solemn meditation differeth from it, for

1. Study is of all manner of things whether natural, civil, or artificial, or mathematical, &c. But meditation is only of matters that concern our eternal welfare.

2. The matters that are most knotty and difficult, and generally such as afford little spiritual nourishment, as Criticisms, Crenologies.

gies, and controversies : but the matter of meditation is of things plain, and of great spiritual advantage.

3. Thirdly, The end of Study is knowledge, but the end of meditation is holiness. If one seeth a learned man we may conclude that he hath been a great student; and if we see a godly man, we may conclude that that man hath meditated much.

Fourthly, Solemn meditation differeth from contemplation in these several particulars, as

1. Contemplation is more like the beatifical vision which the Angels have of God in Heaven. Meditation is like the kindling of fire and contemplation more like a fire when fully kindled; the one is like the Spouse seeking of Christ and the other is like the Spouse enjoying of Christ.

2. Contem

2. Contemplation is one effect and end of meditation.

3. Meditation is like the Bees flying to several flowers, or like one, smelling to Flowers particularly, and contemplation is like the smelling of them altogether in a nosegay, or like the water that is distilled from them all. The Spouse in her description of Christ is like to meditation, her concluding that he is altogether lovely is like to contemplation.

Now there are four kinds of solemn meditation according to the four several subjects of it.

1. Some solemn Meditations are upon Sermons that we hear, which is a very useful and necessary practise for Christians, and it is better to hear one Sermon only and meditate on that, then to hear two Sermons and meditate on neither: neither is it necessary nor possible to set down a method for
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meditating on Sermons, since the method of Sermons is so various, I shall only say thus much in particular, that the end of such meditation is neither only, nor chiefly that we may the better fix the heads and substance of the Sermon in our heads, not that we may the better understand, and be fuller instructed of the truth of the point we heard preached upon, but especially to work those truths, advices & motives upon our affections, that are proposed to us in the Sermon.

2. The second kind of solemn meditation, is, when upon some providential occasion, or upon some spiritual distemper, or temptation, or almost any thing of that nature, we retire our selves and powre out our soules in prayers and soliloquies, which may not but in a very large sense be called prayers, being mixt of such various and differing parts, sometimes speaking to God and telling him how we
stand

stand affected to him, and his ordinances, sometimes speaking to our own soul, chiding encouraging or instructing of it, sometimes speaking to our selves what we resolve to do, what we intend to say unto God; all which you may find in the 42. *Psalm*, and many more of that nature both in that and many other *Psalms* which may not properly be called prayers, but solemn occasional meditations, and the occasions of those meditations are often set down in the beginning of the *Psalm*, and they differ from those occasional meditations (of which I spoke in the beginning of this Chapter) only in their duration and solemnity just as solemn prayers differ from jaculatory prayers, and to set down any method for these is not convenient, because they observe no method, and differ very little in any thing else from that kind of meditation for which directions are set down in this Treatise.

3. The

3. The next kind of meditation is upon some practical truths of Religion: many directions for which and instances of the same are set down in this Treatise.

4. The fourth and last kind of solemn meditation is that which is upon Scripture, which shall be the subject of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth Chapters of this Treatise.

CHAP. IV.

That solemn Meditation is a duty.

THAT this is a duty is evident,

1. From the practice of Gods People, *Gen.* 24. 63. That this was a solemn Meditation is evident, because he went out into the field to perform it, and had no other business there but this; 'Tis not said when

when he was in the field he meditated, as if it were occasional but to shew that it was a set duty, 'tis said that *he went out to meditate.*

2. 'Tis commanded *Josh. 1. 8* and this duty of meditation is set down as a chief means to be sanctified of God for the keeping of the Law.

3. It is as a Characteristical difference between a wicked man and a Saint.

4. To consider, in Scripture, and to meditate, are Synonima's, and the necessity of it appears in this, because that the cause of sin is the want of consideration and not want of knowledge, *Isa. 1. 3.* and 'tis not much for us to hear Sermons, nay, though we be never so attentive, it will not serve the turn, *Psal. 41. 12.* It is more then to know, for who is there almost in the world that knows not that he must dye, but few are there that consider it? *Dent. 32. 29.*

5. The

5. The necessity of Meditation appears in this, that no man is converted without Meditation, for every one that is converted the method is this.

1. He heares the truths of God.
2. He is convinced of them.
3. He considers and meditates upon them, and sees how much they concern him.
4. He is affected with them.
5. Being thus affected it raiseth holy resolutions of better obedience.

But it will be objected, alas, I am not book learned, how shall I perform this duty of Meditation ? This is rather for Ministers, &c,

Ans. 1. I may say of Meditation as 'tis said of the Mathematicks, he that is a rational man, and doth but improve his reason, though he hath neither tongues nor art to help him, may understand & grow to an extraordinary excellency in those Arts ; So he that hath grace,
if

if he doe but exercise and improve it, though he hath not learning, will excell the learnedest man in the world that hath not grace in the duty of Meditation 'tis not learning but devotion that enables a man to this duty.

2. Can a man be a blessed man without Learning? then he may meditate without it, *Psal.* 12.

Obs. But 'tis a very hard duty.

Ans. 1. That shews it to be an excellent duty, for the harder any duty is, the more excellent; the hardness consists in this, that 'tis contrary to our corruptions, and the more contrary any thing is to that which is bad, 'tis so much the better.

2. Can you expect any duty should be easie at first? Is there any thing so of temporal things which are of any excellency, as Writing, playing on a Lute, &c.

3. Because

3. Because 'tis so powerful to mortifie corruptions ; sweet things nourish, and bitter things purge : therefore if you will only perform those duties that are delightful, they will nourish not purge out corruption.

4. Get but your hearts inflamed with the love of God, then this duty will not only be easie and delightful, but it will be a duty that you cannot tell almost how to avoid; for it is as hard not to think of what one loves as to think of what one hates ; bid the covetous man not think of his money, or bid him think of the things of God, and he will find an equal difficulty in both. Indeed the love of God and desire of heavenly things are got by meditation, but when once our hearts are enflamed by Meditation then our Meditations are enflamed by love : As an Oven is first heated by fewel, and then

then it sets the fewel on fire, and as with the fewel you must put in fire and blow it, but afterwards it kindleth of it self, so the difficulty of Meditation is at first : When there is but as it were a spark of love in the heart, it will cost him some pains by meditation to blow it up to a flame, but afterwards the heart will be so heated with these flames of love, that it will so inflame all the thoughts, that it will make us not only easily but necessarily to meditate on the things of God.

5. The people of God generally have found a great deal of difficulty in praying without a form at first. Many godly Ministers used a set Form of Prayer before their Sermons not many years since, and when they and private Christians came to pray at first without a Form, they found a strangeness and an unreadiness thereunto; So it is in Meditation, Christians being

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not

not used to it, it will seem a strange and difficult work unto them, but I may say of it, as is said of the yoke Christ, *Grave cum tollis; suave cum tuleris*, thou wilt find it very delightful, or at least very profitable.

Ob. But if it be such a necessary duty, how comes it to pass that it hath been so generally neglected by the people of God.

Ans. It hath been practised by the people of God both in Scripture as is proved, (and it is evident that the Psalmes of *David* are frequently nothing but Meditations, though not in this Method) and by many in our dayes.

2. It being a private Closet-duty, the omission nor performance of it could be taken notice of, and so the omission of it could not be reprov'd, nor performance observed.

3. The Directions and Instructions for Meditation have been
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generally very abstruse and intricate.

CHAP. V.

Preparatory Directions for the Circumstances of solemn Meditation.

I. **F**OR the place, that must be private, remote from company and noise; *Isaac went into the fields*, our Saviour into a Garden, and *David* wisheth us to enter into *our chamber*, and be still, Psal. 4.4. and our Saviour bids us enter into *our Closet*, and shut the door, the place must be such as must be remote from noise and company, or any thing which might distract us in the duty; and such a place that we may not be interrupted or forced to break off, before the duty be ended, it must be also private and remote from the observation of others, so that we may neither be heard nor seen, because there

are divers gestures and expressions, which are not convenient for any one but God and ones own soul to be privy to: Which of those places you find to be most advantagious to you in the matters of Meditation you may choose.

2. For the time when; *The best is in the morning.* 1. Because it is the first-fruits of the day, and the first-fruits being holy, all the rest are sanctified. 2. Because our thoughts being then not soyled with worldly business, will not be so subject to be distracted. 3. Because the body it self is more serene then after Meals, and this Duty needs an empty stomack, not only because the head will be more clear and fit for Meditation, but also because many passages of Meditation require so much intencion of the mind and fervency of affection that they do hinder Digestion. 4. Because that it being in the morning will have an influence upon

upon the whole day, but this is not an Universal Rule; for we read that *Isaac* went forth in the Evening to Meditate, *Gen. 24. 36.* and in case the Subject of your Meditation be a Sermon, then it may be the best time is, immediately after the hearing of it before your affections cool, or your memory fail you.

2. For the how long, considering the parts of Meditation are so many, *viz.* Preparation, Considerations, Affections, Resolutions, &c. and none of them are to be past slightly over, for Affections are not so quickly raised, nor are we to cease blowing the fire as soon as ever it beginneth to flame, until it be well kindled, half an hour may be thought to be the least for beginners, and an hour for those that are versed in this Duty; *But there are two Rules in this Particular especially to be observed.*

1. That as we ought not to leave

off our prayers before that temper and frame of heart is wrought, which is suitable to the matter of our prayers, *viz.* we should not leave off the confession of sin till our hearts are made sensible of and humble for our sins, nor should we leave off our praises until our hearts are filled with holy admirings and adorings of God, and inflamed with his love; So the end of Meditation being affections and resolutions, we should not leave off until those are wrought. 2. As in private Prayer, so long as we finde our hearts enlarged by the pourings of the Spirit of Supplication upon us, we are not to leave off unless by our continuance in that duty we must omit another duty to which we were more particularly obliged at that time; So in meditation as long as we find the heart affected we are to continue it: But this Caution must be given, that in such enlargements we must not continue

continue them longer generally then while they come freely and without much straining and compulsion, for that honey that comes freely of it self from the Comb is pure, but that which is forced by heat and pressure is not so well relished, but this Caution is for extraordinary enlargements, for if the heart be dead, we must use all means to awaken it; But as fire must be blown till it be well kindled, but afterwards blowing hinders the boiling of any thing that is set over it; So when once our hearts are inflamed and enlarged with holy affections in an extraordinary manner, 'tis but a hindrance of our affections to return to the Meditation of those Points that raised them.

CHAP. VI.

*Rules for the Subject, of Solemn
Meditation.*

1. **B**Y no means let it be Controversie, *for that will turn Meditation into Study.*

2. Nor nice Speculations, *for they be sapless, without nourishment:* Besides being so light they float in the brain, having no weight to sink them down into the heart, and indeed were they there, they have nothing in them to affect the heart withall.

3. Let the Subject of Meditation be the plainest, powerfulest, and usefulest Truths of God, as Death, Hell, Heaven, Judgement, Mercies of God, our own sins, the Love and Sufferings of Christ, &c.

4. Let the Subject of your Meditation be that, that is most suitable

suitable to your Spiritual wants; as in time of desertion, meditate most of the love and mercies of God, &c.

Rules for meditation it self, they are of three sorts. 1. Preparatory: 2. For the body of the Duty. 3. For the Conclusion.

Two things by way of preparation, besides the choice of the Subject, the first is, *be convinced of, and to be affected with the presence of God*: The second is, *Prayer for assistance from God.* 2. For the body Meditation it self, It consists of three parts: The first I call Consideration, which is nothing but the convincing our hearts of several Truths that do belong to that Subject whereof we Meditate: As if the Subject of our Meditation be Death, the Considerations may go thus, Alas O my Soul, how, and when, and where we shall die we know not, generally men

die sooner then they expect, and certain it is, whensoever that hour comes, we must bid adieu to honors, pleasures, riches, friends, and at last our own bodies, &c. The second part is affections, whether it be love of God or Christ, or spiritual things, despising of the world, admiring of God or any other spiritual affection: The third part are Resolutions to do this or that, or leave this or that; Now this is the most proper and genuine way of Meditation appears by this. 1. Because it is not artificial and such as requires Learning, as those Directions are which wish us to consider the efficient, final, formal, material cause of death, the adjuncts, concomitants, &c. which though they may somewhat help the learned, yet such hard words and artificial methods fright the ignorant: 2. This is the very method of those Meditations by which every one that is brought home to God

is

is converted ; For the first thing in conversion is our being convinced of some Truths , which conviction raiseth affections , for if the truths of God end in conviction, and go no no further, nay, if they end in affections only , and never come to resolutions of shunning evil and doing good, conversion can never be perfected , as for example, One is convinced that he is a miserable undone wretch by reason of Original and Actual abomination , Upon this conviction fear and sorrow are raised, yet if these do not work in us a firm resolution of leaving those sins, we are yet in our sins and unconverted. 3. There are several things for the concluding of Meditation, as shall appear.

CHAP. VII.

Directions for the working of our hearts to be convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.

FOR being convinced of and affected with the presence of God, it may thus be wrought.

I. We are to consider that God is present every where, as truly, really, and essentially, as he is in Heaven; For God did not create Heaven to continue still but to manifest his presence, for *the Heaven of Heavens are not able to contain him*, for God is neither included by, nor excluded from any place, and though *Jacob* saith, *Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not*, Gen. 28. 16. yet we must not imagine that *Jacob* was ignorant of that Truth, but did not actually consider it; but *David* in the 139 *Psalms* is clear in explaining

ing and clearing up the omnipresence of God. 2. We must consider that God doth more peculiarly observe his people, while they are performing of heavenly duties, whether it be, while they are speaking unto him, or he speaking unto them, he doth then more especially observe the motion and frame of their hearts, as when we are in any company we do more especially look upon and observe those to whom we speak, or who speak to us; yet this is to be understood not as if God did observe us more at one time then another, in respect of Gods knowledge it self, but thus, that God is much more offended with us, if our carriage and frame of heart be more irreverent, and unholy in the time of prayer and Meditation, then at such times as we are in the works of our particular calling.

3. We may consider with our selves that Christ doth actually behold

hold us, especially in these duties of holiness, for it is not the distance of place that doth hinder Christs knowledge and exact observing of us. Little did *Nathanael* then think that Christ saw him under the Fig-tree; *Nathanael* did not see Christ, nor was he corporally present then, yet, Christ beheld *Nathanael* when he prayed; so Christ beheld *Stephen* before the heavens were opened, and the opening of the heavens was not that that whereby Christ might be enabled the better to behold *Stephen*, but that *Stephen* might thereby be the better enabled to see that Christ looked on him; without all controversie God knows and observes with what reverence, faith, love, &c. we pray, for else our prayers would be in vain, and our faith also vain, for how could he give us according to our faith if he knew not how much our faith were? If the inward frame of our hearts

hearts were not observed by him, then an hypocrite that hath better expressions should get more by his prayers, then a true *Nathanael* that hath a better heart.

4. Suppose that thou hadst lived in Christs time, or suppose that Christ were now in *England*, consider with what joy, reverence, and confidence thou wouldest go to him for the pardon of thy sins, or for any other mercy thou stoodest in need of; Thou maist go so to him now, his distance from thee in respect of corporal presence doth not make him less able to know thy wants, or hear thy prayers, nor his being now glorified makes him less willing to grant them then if it were bodily present in the room with thee in the form of a servant, as he was once at *Jerusalem*: the glory of Christ doth not hinder his love and goodness, for Christ is the expresse Image of his Father, and Gods Attributes do

do not not hinder one another; The Majesty of God doth not set bounds unto his goodness, and make that finite, nor doth his goodness make his Majesty less glorious, his goodness makes his Majesty more amiable, and his Majesty makes his goodness more wonderful; So neither doth the exaltation of Christ cause him to abate any thing of his goodness unto his people, but if any way his Love be altered, it is by being made more then it was, and when Christ was upon earth, you must have come to him by Faith, or you could obtain no mercy from him, and by faith though he be in heaven you may obtain any mercy now: You may consider any one or two or more of these considerations, until your heart be so convinced of and affected with the presence of God, that you may thereby be the better fitted for the

the carrying on the duty of Meditation more effectually.

CHAP. VIII.

*Concerning the Preparatory Prayer
that is to be used before
Meditation:*

THE next Preparatory consideration is Prayer, and it is to be performed in these words, or to like purpose: Lord, my design in this Duty of Meditation is not to be an hour sequestred from Worldly Employments, for that were to be idle an Hour, and to encrease my Sinnes not my Graces, but my Business at this time is to be so convinced and affected with those spiritual Truths revealed in thy Word, that I may fully resolve by thy strength and power to reform my Life, because I can neither understand the things that belong to my peace, nor under-

understanding them, be convinced of the certainty and truth of them; Nay Lord, though my understanding be enlightened, yet without thee mine affections cannot be enflamed; I can neither know, resolve, nor perform what is good without thee, for from thee comes both the will and the deed of thy good pleasure, I beseech thee Lord that thou wouldest give me thy grace to make conscience of performing this duty with my whole strength, and not carelessly and perfunctorily; And Lord do thou enlighten me with and convince me of thy Truths, and so affect my heart with the love of holiness and hatred of sin, &c. that I may thereby be enabled fully, firmly (notwithstanding all the opposition that the flesh, world, or devil can make) to run the wayes of thy Commandements with joy and with speed, and when thou hast wrought in me the will so to do, give me also the deed, and that

that I may not trust to the strength of my resolutions, but to the continual gracious assistance of thy Spirit for the performance of those things that through thee I shall resolve to do: Holy and blessed God, Christ hath sent me, wishing me to come to thee in his Name for any mercies I stand in need of; grant these things which I have begged for the Lord Jesus sake, *Amen.*

This, or a prayer to the like purpose thou art to put up unto God, but it is to be done with thy whole heart, for thou must know that it is by the strength which thou shalt get from God by prayer, whereby thou shalt be enabled to perform this or any other duty profitably, for it is he that teacheth us to profit, he that begins a holy duty without God, will end it without God also. It is a dangerous thing to think that we can by our natural

tural parts, Learning, or by the strength of Grace already received without Gods further assistance perform any thing that can please God, or edifie our own Souls; For though our Mountain be made strong, yet if he shall hide his face, there will be trouble. We may with much more Sense say, Now the Sunne shines so bright, and the Air is so clear, that now we can do well enough for a while, though the Sunne be Eclipsed; then to say, though our Hearts be never so much inflamed with the love of God; *Now we are so filled and inflamed by his Love, we shall do well enough by our own strength, for at the present we need not Gods further assistance; Give us but Fewel, Matter to Meditate of, and we shall be able to continue and encrease our flames: Do not count it a Burthen but a Mercy and Priviledge, that God hath necessitated and commanded thee*

thee alwayes to draw strength from him.

CHAP. IX.

Several Rules for managing the Duty of Consideration.

1. **T**HEY must be plain Considerations, not intricate and abstruse, For the main end of meditation being the affecting of our heart, and reforming of our lives, and not informing of our understandings, our considerations should be so plain, that they may be without difficulty understood.

2. It must be certain and evident, not controversial and doubtful; For the end of Meditation is not properly to encrease our knowledge, but to improve our knowledge.

3. Much less should our considerations be Curious and Nice Speculations, or if we choose any

Book, by reading whereof to help our Meditation, we must not choose such as are filled with flourishes and Rhetorick, for let a truth be drest never so curiously, the Wit and Eloquence wherewith the Truth is clothed, leaves the Truth before it comes to the heart, as some Meats that are made in curious works are spoiled of all those curiosities before they come to the stomach; and the Bee lights not upon the Rose which hath the freshest colour, and the sweetest smell, but upon the Thyme that is an Herb of little beauty, Besides Eloquence to them that Meditate is much like Pictures in Books to Children, they neglect their Lesson to look on their Pictures, they will be looking on their pictures while they should be getting their Lesson: So the fancy will be playing with the Eloquence, when the heart should be feeding on and affected with the truths we read. The less
time

time the Truth stayes in the understanding, the better ; for the work of the understanding in this business is not to retain , but to convey the Truths to the heart ; *As Physicians use when they are to give Medecines to Cure any Disease in the Bladder, they give such as may soonest come to the part affected, for if they stay by the way they lose their vertue, before they come to the part which they shou'd cure ;* So if the Understanding shall stay dallying with the Eloquence or searching out the meaning or certainty of the Truth it considers any long while, the heart will lie cold and unaffected all that while : It is somewhat like that Story concerning Musicians that were to play before the Emperor of the Turks, who were so long tuning their Instruments which they should have done before, that he would not stay to hear their Musick ; *Therefore let the Truths you consider of to raise affections be plain, certain, nourishing.* 4. The

4. The fourth Rule is, that in case any doubt ariseth upon a plain known Truth (for Satan will be subject to cast in doubts against the most evident Truths) then do as the Arch angel did with Satan, you may enter the Lists with Satan, and it may be when you have a little considered and disputed the matter, the mist may vanish, and the Sun shine clear, and Satan being resisted will presently fly : but if Satan shall still wrangle, and your Blasphemous Doubts shall not be removed, then dispute no more, but say as the Arch angel did, the Lord rebuke thee Satan : *As a woman that is attempted to be ravished will strive and struggle a while, and if she findes that she can quickly get loose, she flies, but otherwise she cries out for help : The Arch angel first disputed, but when that would not speedily prevail, appealed unto God ; To this purpose it is good to be exceedingly well grounded* in

in Truths from the word of God, for that is the Sword of the Spirit, and that by which our Saviour silenced Satan in all his Temptations. 'Tis a dangerous thing to dispute with Satan by Humane Reason, we must *put on the Armour of God*, if we will be able to stand in the evil day of Temptation, and when all is done to stand.

5. The fifth Rule is, that we should not over-multiply our Considerations, but as soon as by considering of the Truths of God we find our hearts strongly affected, then we are to pass over that part: but this Caution must be observed, that we must not as soon as we find our heart never so little affected, leave off our Considerations; *The Bee will not go from the Flower so long as any Honey is easily drawn out of it:* and indeed it is a Temptation which the people of God ought to

to take notice of; That Satan is subject to make one pass over Duties before we have drawn half the strength of them, as for Example, *When we are confessing of our sins, as soon as ever our hearts begin in the least measure to be humbled, he fills them with joy, such joy may generally be suspected to be from Satan, or our own naughty hearts, not from God.* Corn when it springs up too fast, and grows rank, Husbandmen cut it down, a Corrosive that is laid on to eat dead flesh, must not be taken off as soon as it begins to smart, *the Wheat in the stony ground did soonest spring up:* We should let our Considerations take deep Root, and not passe over to affections and resolutions as soon as ever they take hold of our heart, but it is alwayes to be remembered, that in case our affections be very much inflamed, as soon as ever we begin our Considerations we are to yield

to the Inspirations of God, and to follow the leading of the Spirit; for this Method that is set down, is not to bind up and limit the extraordinary working of the Spirit of God; but if our hearts be only a little moved, we must do as I have said, not leave blowing the fire as soon as ever it begins a little to be kindled, for green wood (*for such are we in spiritual matters*) will suddenly go out, unless it be very well kindled.

CHAP. X.

Concerning Affections.

Knowledge is for Consideration, and Consideration is to raise Affections, and the end of Affections are Resolutions, as the end of Resolution is Action and the re-forming of our lives; Our affections are various according to the

Subject we Meditate of; Sometimes we admire Gods goodness, his Majesty, his Wisdom; Sometimes we admire and wonder at our own folly and madness, that we should live so contrary to our own Principles, that those truths that God revealed unto us on purpose that we might improve them to our eternal welfare, we should lay by as things forgotten & useless; *As if one that had a Recit to cure the Stone, and were convinced of the Excellency and Efficacy of it, yet should make no other use of it, but to read it over and, lay it by;* Sometimes the affection is despising the World, and abhorring our selves in Dust and Ashes, sometimes Sorrow, sometimes Joy, Love, Fear, &c. which you may find abundantly in the Psalmes of David, which were but Davids Meditations, though not in this Method, Now a

soon

soon as our affections are much stirred and raised, it is time to pass over to resolutions.

CHAP. XI.

Rules Concerning Resolutions.

I. **L**et your resolutions be firm and strong, not sleighty, let not them be Velleities or wishes, but resolved purposes or Determinations; *Do not say with thy self, Well, I see very well that the wrath of God comes upon the Children of disobedience, and I must to Hell, or leave my taking the Name of God in vain; I do not well to swear, and I wish I could leave it but say thus with thy self, I am resolved by the blessing of God whatsoever comes of it; to leave my swearing; There is no dallying with God, nor giving a faint denial to sinne;*

I have heard of one who hearing the sin of swearing spoke much against by some in whose company he was, observed their Discourse, and said, Well, by the blessing of God I will never swear more, and though he was a common Swearer before, he was never since heard to swear one Oath to this day.

2. Let thy Resolutions be for the time present, not for the future; Do not say, Well, I do intend to leave my drinking, but for the present I am engaged in such a meeting, and for that time I will do as I have done, but after that I will think of it, and take some order for the mending of it; This is but one of Satans wiles whereby he cosoneth thee of the whole life by dayes, which he could not do by years; If Satan should say unto thee, Thou shalt never repent, never leave thy drunkenness, it may be it would startle thee, and he would be in danger of getting nothing

nothing of thee by asking so much: but he tempting thee only to let it alone this week, and afterwards for a week longer, &c. he obtains the same thing at several times which he could not obtain at once.

3. The third Rule, Let thy resolutions be not only against thy sin, but against the means, occasions, and temptations to it; for it is better to discern Satan, if it may be, then to put a Sword in his hand, and say, *thou canst well enough defend thy self against him*: This is Solomons advice, He doth not say to him that would fly Adultery, You may talk with a Harlot, but, *Be not inticed by her words to uncleanness*, he will not give thee leave to go into her house, or so much as by her door, *Pro. 5. 8*. So when he diswadeth the Drunkard from drunkenness, he wisheth him not so much as to look upon the Wine;

For as the beauty of a Harlot, so the colour of Wine will enflame our desires after it, *Prov. 23. 31.* after this manner did *Job* resolve; *I have made a covenant with my eyes that I will not look upon a woman,* and he resolved not onely against the sin it self, but against the beginnings and temptations to the sin, *Job 31. 1.* and God forbidding the *Nazarites* Wine, forbad them to eat Grapes, least by that they shou'd be enticed to drink Wine. Now that I may press this Rule, I shall answer an Objection which generally wicked men are subject to make, as thus, *When we perswade a Drunkard that he would leave his Drunkenness, that he would for two or three Moneths resolve not to go into a Tavern or an Ale-house, he cries out of preciseness, and saith, What, do you count it a sin to drink in Tavern or Ale-house? I answer therefore,*

1. That

1. That when our hearts are affected with the sinfulness of sin, and wrought up to a hatred of it, we do as when we exceedingly hate any man, we avoid all those places where we are likely to meet him; I may bid such an one ask God why he forbids the adulterer to walk by the doors of the Harlot; May he not say, *Why, she lives in a street, and as honest and godly men walk that way as in any other place in the City.*

2. Consider that *Licetis perimus omnes* is a good saying, we generally perish by lawful things, for in things that are unlawful we are generally more watchful.

3. Know this, that though to be tempted be not a sin, yet when we have found by experience that going to a Tavern, &c. hath been a Snare and temptation that hath generally prevailed over us, then to be tempted with such a temptation

is a sin though one yields not, because by going into temptation which we need not, we sin; for if one shall say, *I resolve that though I do speak with the Harlot, I will not consent*; though thou dost so, and resisteth all her Enticements, thou sinnest notwithstanding, for thou plainly breakest the Command, *Pro. 5. 8.*

5. But suppose that it were lawful for thee to drink Wine in a Tavern that thou hast been so often ensnared by it, yet one effect of true repentance is an holy revenge, by debarring our selves those things which are lawful, taking Gods part against our selves, *2 Cor. 7. 11.*

6. Consider that if thy hatred of sin and love of God be not strong enough to stop thee from the beginnings, and keep thee from the occasions of sin, how canst thou expect

expect that it should keep thee from committing the Sinne it self, when it hath got some advantage over thee. *He that cannot stop himself at first, will much less (when he hath rolled down a steep hill half way) be able to stop himself, for then he falls with more violence, and the same strength to hold will not serve then which would at first; therefore* I shall continue the advice, to resolve not only against the sin, but against the occasion, &c. But I must give you one Caution, that though you finde your heart never so much resolving against, and abhorring of any sin, yet take heed that you build not upon the strength of resolutions, but beg of God that he would enable you by his strength, and that as he hath given you the will, so he would give you the deed also. It was well observed by one as follows.

In effect it is true that we do understand many things by experience which we should not understand by knowledge, as this, I having oftentimes determined to do many things, the one more pious, holy, and Christian than another, and having seen for the most part the issue and effect to be quite contrary to what I determined; and on the contrary, observing that other pious and Christian things were done by me, without my pre-determination or forecast; I stood as it were confounded in my self, not understanding in what this secret did consist; I did not wonder that in things which I determined as a man, the contrary should come to pass of that which I would; but I did wonder that in the things which I determined as a Christian, the same should befall me; and finding my self in this Confusion, it came to pass that I read that Resolution of Saint Peter

Peter

Peter, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee; and considering that though the Resolution was pious, holy, and Christian, the contrary of that which he resolved befel him; I understand that my determinations had not their issue and effect according to my desire, because I did not well consider mine own utter disability to perform any holy and good work; So that I understood by experience, that although God punished my inconsiderateness in not suffering that to come to pass which I intended; yet on the other side he satisfied my general desire of doing good, by suffering that to come to pass which I did not procure, nor hope, nor pretend unto; whence I have gathered, that the will of God is, that I should depend on him in such manner, that I should determine or propound nothing without holding him before mine eyes, shewing unto him my good

good will, and referring unto him the issue and success of my desires and endeavours.

CHAP. XII.

Directions for Vows.

NOW because Vows do very frequently, especially in young beginners follow upon resolutions, and because that very many pious and religious persons have been ensnared by rash Vows, and after Vows it is not fit to make enquiry, therefore I shall set down some Cautions of, and Directions for Vows.

1. As we have said concerning Resolutions, let your Vows be rather against the occasions of sinne then against sin it self.

2. When the subject of your Vows is of things indifferent in themselves.

1. Take

1. Take heed of making any perpetual Vow, for the reason why you make any Vows against any indifferent thing, as in drinking Wine, &c. It is, because then it was a snare unto you, but in process of time, it may cease to be a snare unto you, nay, it may be a very great Snare, and occasion Sicknes or death, not to drink it, as in some cases hath happened.

2. Let all Vows concerning indifferent things be Conditional, and let these two constantly be two of the Conditions. First, That you will abstain from such a thing, or do such a thing, unless you shall be otherwise advised by some godly Minister or private Christian. *I knew a Religious woman that had Vowed to Read many Chapters every day; when she was unmarried she made this Vow, but afterwards in the time of her lying in, and other Weaknesses, the*
Chapters

Chapters were so many, that she did much endanger the losse of her sight, and the neglect of all other duties, when her poverty and family grew great; Now had she added this Caution to her Vow, she might have been delivered out of that snare, and though it be true that in many cases a Vow may be dispensed withall, when we cannot keep it without sin, as in this case, one hath vowed a weekly secret Fast, ones Health, or Child with which one goes will certainly be destroyed by it, yet if it be but an inconvenience, though a very great one, it will not release one from ones Vow, Now the reason why I add that condition (unless some Minister or for want thereof some other godly Christian shall otherwise advise) is because the several cases that may happen are so various that it is impossible to specific them all,

or think of them all, and very difficult to judge of them all, when we make the Vow : And moreover if we should leave it to our selves, we should be too partial, for as when our Consciences are much touched for our sins, we are subject to be too violent in our spiritual revenge, so in a little time when that pang is over, we are subject to be too indulgent to our selves, therefore it is better to say thus, Lord, *I do vow unto thee, that I will keep every week a day of Humiliation, or that I will not drink any Wine this three moneths next following, unless some such occasion shall be ;* That if it had then been, or then thought of when I made my Vow, that such or such, or some other godly Minister would (had I consulted with him then) wisht me not to make that Vow ; then to say, I will do this or that, unless some such occasion be, that were the Vow to be made again,

again, I would not make it. 2. Add this Caution, *viz.* If I remember it I will not drink *Wine* this moneth, the reason is, because if you drink *Wine*, though you did not think of it, you sin if your Vow be absolute; but if it be with that condition it is not a sin, and yet by adding that condition, we give our selves no liberty, since it is not in our power to forget it. The next Caution concerning Vows in indifferent things is this, add a penalty upon the breach of your Vow, which penalty is not added by way of hope of Satisfaction, that's gross ignorance and Superstition, but it must needs run thus, *I will spend half an hour an hour a day in Prayer for the Church to the end of this moneth, or else give so much to the poor, and in such a case if we do either, we sin not*: the reason why we should add a penalty to it, because some inconveniencies may be so great, that it would

would bring some very great mischief upon us, and then we have liberty to take the other part of the Vow, viz. And now this penalty must 1. Not be too light and trivial, but it must be of such consequence that it may be a Tye upon us, and yet not of so great weight as if it should happen, it might prove some great inconvenience to us; For a rich man to say he will give 6 d. to the poor is not considerable, and yet the same may be too heavy a Burthen for one that is very poor to give. The next Rule is, Let this penalty be alwayes of something that is Materially good, as giving to the Poor, spending some time in reading of Scripture; for as for Popish Penances, as whipping, Pilgrimages, and such like, they are unprofitable and ridiculous: The next Rule is, Let this penalty be alwaies
some

some holy Duty that is most contrary to thy Master sin, as if thy Master sin be Covetousness, let it be Alms ; if it be voluptuousness, let it be fasting with prayer , or abstaining wholly for a time from that wherein thou most delightest , &c.

The next Rule is, Let your vows be rather against the outward then the inward acts of sin, rather against speaking angrily then being angry, for though inward acts of sin are worse, yet they are not so much in our power. The next Rule is, if your vows are concerning doing holy duties, it is better to vow to spend some time in reading holy Scripture, or such like, then to read so many Chapters for thou wilt be tempted to read them over too fast, that thou maist have ended, whereas if it be, so much time that thou hast resolved to spend, thou wilt not be so subject to this temptation.

CHAP.

C A H P. XIII.

*Rules for the concluding
of Meditation.*

1. **T**Hou art earnestly to beg of God strength to perform whatever thou hast resolved to do in his service; This must be done fervently, though briefly and humbly, proceeding from an earnest desire to do what thou hast promised and resolved, and also from an humble sense of thine ability to perform it.

2. The second Duty is Thanksgiving, if thou shalt perceive any heavenly warmth of love or Spiritual hatred of sin, or any other Spiritual effect wrought in thy heart, thou art to give God the glory, and not to rejoyce in thy self, but in the Lord, but thou art to rejoyce with trembling, knowing that

that if thou art puffed up, though thou hast the will to do good wrought in thee, yet if thou provokest him, he can stop it, that thou shalt never be able to do what thou resolvest to do.

The first is an humble acknowledgement of our failings in the performing of this duty; For if we were not green wood, that love which is now but a spark, would have been a flame; God is not wanting unto us, but we are wanting unto our selves and him; After these are performed, there remain three Duties more.

I. We are to remember what Vows and promises we have made, and it is very usefull to write down all the Vows (as thou makest them) in a Book, because that we shall else be subject to forget the Vow, or the time, or conditions upon which we made it: And it is good to have a Book to keep a Register of things
in

in it (besides a Diary which I have spoken of, and given Rules for in a Manuel, Entituled, *A Directory to Christian perfection.*

1. Let one head be (for which you are to leave some leaves) for Vows, under which you must write down all your Vows or Resolutions, as you make them, or Spiritual promises for Christians, and such like.

The Second must be for the mercies of God, Eminent deliverances, and also answers of Prayers; These are to be set down with all pertinent Circumstances that may any way encrease the mercy.

The third head should be for grosser failings, which were good to be writ down, not in Letters at length that every one may read them, but in Characters known only to our selves; there are other things which because I do not now speak, purposely of that business I omit.

The

The second thing after Meditation is ended, is, to remember what passages in our Meditation did most affect us, and as it were to lay them up in our thoughts, that frequently we may in the rest of the day think of them; As when we walk in a Garden we content not our selves with enjoying the fragrancy of the flowers while we are there, but if we may have leave we often gather a Nosegay to smell of the rest of the day. In this business of Meditation do thou likewise.

The third duty after Meditation is by degrees warily and unwillingly to go out of the presence of God to wordly employments; Do not go from the presence of God as a bird out of the Snare, with joy and with speed: And thou must go also watchfully and warily from such Employments, as one that carries some precious liquor in a shallow, broad, brittle dish he looks to

to his way, to the Dish and liquor that is in it, lest by holding of it awry by falls or stumblings, he should spill the one, or break the other: So must thou be watchful over thy wayes, else the grace that God hath powred into thy heart in this duty will be spilt. To rush into holy Duties or out of them, argues two great undervaluing of the things of God.

CHAP. XIV.

*Of the Duty and General Rules for
Meditating upon Scriptures*

THere are three great Designs the people of God have in reading of the Holy Scripture.

I. To be very ready and conversant in the holy Writ, that so upon all occasion whether it be for direction or answering of a temptation. We may not be to seek,
E and

and to the end it is necessary that we read some Chapters in the bible, every day three or four Chapters every day will read over the Bible once in a year.

The next Design and end that the people of God have in reading of the Bible is, that they may understand it : The first had need be done with all serious attention, but this with much more ; And so I come to the third end of a Saints reading the Word, of which is that when he hath read it, he may meditate upon it, this is the most necessary and useful Design of our reading the Scripture, which is to be done with the greatest seriousness of mind as possibly can be. But as all Scripture is not equally suited to this end, so neither can we think at all times to be in a fit frame and temper to perform this duty, we can go but slowly on in this way, and were every verse in the

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the Bible a fit Subject matter for our Meditation, our life were far too short to Meditate it over, or the third part of it; That this Meditating upon Scripture is a duty needeth no more proof then this, to wit, that the Psalmist puts it as a necessary Ingredient, into the Character of a blessed man, *viz. that he is one that meditateth in the Law of the Lord day and night*, in the 1. Psalm and the 2. verse; If thou didst never Meditate (*I do not say according to the Method that I have set down*) upon the Word of God, thou art an accursed Creature; There are but a few who think this to be true, or are persuaded that this Duty of Meditation is so Indispensibly necessary, or at least, that live accordingly. Let us look a little into the holy Scripture, and see the practise of the Saints, *David the holiest man for his affections that we read of;*

and you shall find him very frequent, nay indeed daily exercised in this duty, *Psal.* 63. 6. 77. 12. 119. 15, 23 48, 78, 79, 99, 146. by this means he saith he got more wisdom then those who one would think are most likely to get wisdom, for first Malice maketh a man very wise to do mischief, it is no wonder, for the Diuel helpeth such in their wicked devises. Secondly, Those who are aged are generally wise men, for VVisdom is with the Aged. And then Thirdly, Tutors are wiser then their Pupils, yet *David* went far beyond them all, which wisdom he attained unto by being much in Meditation upon the Scripture, as he telleth us in his 119. *Psal.* & ver. 98, 99, 100 *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser then my enemies, for they are ever with me, nay further he saith in the 99 ver. I have more understanding then all my Teachers; how got he
br that*

that wisdom? *Why it was by making Gods Testimonies his meditation, and then he understood more then the Ancients, because, I keep thy Precepts, as he speaketh in the 100. vers. Joshua a King, notwithstanding his great and important Affairs (being the Monarch of the Jews) yet he was commanded continually to Meditate upon Scripture. The Book of the Law was not to depart out of his mouth, but he was therein to Meditate day and night, as you may read more at large in the 1 Cb. of Jos. v. 8. I have observed in other kinds of Solemn meditation. So is this, there is little of learning required for performance of it, as Joshua was but a servant to Moses, and so not likely to be so learned a man; and David a man, the most conversant in meditation, and that with the best success, that we do read of, yet he was but a Shepherd, and afterwards*

Souldier, employments which require much Learning to make a man capable of: As for the Rules and Direction of this Duty, they differ as to the main not much from those I have hereafter given, for solemn Meditation upon some particular Points of Religion: As for the preparatory acts they are the same in both; We are to consider seriously with our selves of the Scope of the words, that so we may the more fully understand their drift and aim, and we are not to let the truth pass, until we have by effections, examination, or resolution some wayes advantaged our selves in the most holy Faith, or some wayes else benefitted our souls, by a general view taken of the words of the Text, we may see the abundant sweetness and fragrancy of the Word of God, as we do the odour of flowers by sensing them; Now Meditation draweth

draweth forth the Honey of the Flowers into our bowels, and nourisheth us thereby, the beauty and Odour of Flowers are very delightful, but they nourish not, *so bare understanding of the words themselves do rather delight then profit us*, and if we go no further, it is but so much on in order to Solemn Divine Meditation. I look upon it as one of the greatest sins of the Professors of England, That the reading, studying, and meditating upon Scripture is so much neglected, hence people grow not in knowledge: *I have writ the great things of my Law, and they are strange things unto you saith God, Hof: 8.12.* Doth any man let the Letters of his friends lye by him and never read them: If Lawvers should never read Law Books, but have them in their Studies, it would be very absurd; how wonderful would they be to seek in the resolving of

case, if upon the thousand part so good grounds as we have, that the Scripture is the Word of God, we should hear of some Prophecy from God, setting down what would be the doom of *England*, and all these publick Transactions, would not every one be industrious to get it, and read it? *We have a more sure word of Prophecy, and that which teacheth of matters of far greater concernment, then the temporal welfare of this Nation, and yet it lyeth by us as a thing forgotten.*

The Rules for Meditating upon the Scripture, are either those which highly concern the matter of Meditations, or the right Manner of them; For the right Manner of our Meditations, let it be with all Reverence and Humility, and sense of Gods Majesty upon our Spirits, and
how

how utterly unable we be to understand the VVord of God, without the Spirit of God; if any one in the pride of his heart shall think by the strength of his Gifts and Parts, Savingly to understand the Mysteries of Salvation, he will find himself quite mistaken; *For as God sendeth the Rich empty away, so he will send the Wise, and the Prudent, ignorant away.*

It seemeth a strange carriage in Christ, to rejoyce in the Spirit, that God had hidden the Mysteries of the Gospel from the Wise and Prudent: It is wonderfull Arrogance for any one to think he can know God without his leave, whether he will or no, or think to see God by any Light but by his own. He may as well see the Sun without the Sun; one put a question why Christ came not as *Moses*, or as a Prince, but in

the form of a Servant, nor as John the Baptist in an outward austere way, but came eating and drinking, he was answered among many other things, especially for this, *that he might deceive the reason of man.* For had he come in the outward Form and Manner of a Prince, then humane reason, might have something to build upon that he was the *Messias* : Outward Mortification is in high esteem with the World, but inward Mortification, and to be inwardly holy without proclamation, is most sincere.

The second thing for the manner of your Meditation, if you would meditate aright, is to come with an indifferent mind, and take heed of bringing the Creature to your mind, but bring your mind to the Scripture, and hear what the Lord will say unto you.

Thirdly :

Thirdly, Let your Meditations upon Scripture be very serious, we are to know God as well as to love him with all our mind & strength: We may do the things of the World well enough, and yet mingle many thoughts of God with our worldly Employments, *but we cannot mingle the things of God and the World together.*

Fourthly, Let the end of your Meditations be to raise holy affections, and to have stronger resolutions for God then ever you had before, not only to know more of, but that we may have a greater love to God, or else 'tis not Meditation but study.

CHAP. XV.

*Several Rules for the Subject of our
Spiritual Meditation.*

I. **T**HE first Rule to be observed in the choice of a Subject for your Meditation, is this, *viz.* To choose those places of Scripture to meditate upon, as are most suitable to your Master Sin, as if your Master Sin be Pride, choose those Scriptures to Meditate upon which is most in speaking against Pride, and set down Gods hatred and Detestation of it, or his severe Judgements executed upon it; And all his Threatnings against it, as you may see in several places that set down the Evil Nature or Effects of it, and

and so of any other Sinne that is not thy Master Sinne, for it is of great concernment, and a sure sign of Sincerity to keep our selves from our own iniquity: *Thus you find David speaking of himself, that he kept himself from his own iniquity, Psal. 18.23.*

2. Meditate upon those Scriptures which you find suitable to the dispensation of Gods Providences, as when the Church is in danger of persecution, *Then meditate upon those Scriptures which either command you to have, or do commend the Saints of God for having a sence of the Saints sufferings upon their Spirits, set down the places that make Promises to those that are sensible of the sufferings of the Saints, and also those places that do set out Gods love to his people, and promises of support, and deliverance to them in the time of their*

their adversity meditate also upon the Histories of Gods deliverance of his people in their great Straights, and also of the way and Method of his deliverance, of those Prayers also that prevaileth with God for their deliverance in such cases.

3. Meditate upon those Scriptures which are suitable to mens personal providences, *as if thou art rich, then meditate upon those Scriptures that set down the danger, and the duty of the rich: If thou art afflicted with sickness, poverty, or disgrace, imprisonment, meditate upon those places which set down thy Duty in those Conditions, and those Promises that set down comfort for thee in those conditions.* Meditate upon those Scriptures which set down the carriage of Saints in thy Condition, and how God supported them, and at last Delivered them.

4. Let your Meditation be upon Scriptures suitable to your Temptation: *As if you are tempted to uncleanness as Joseph was, then meditate upon those Scriptures which speak against uncleanness; It is fit to meditate of the hainousness of sin in such cases, and not of those Scriptures that may increase your Temptations, but of those that may remove them, as a person under Desertion is not to meditate of those Scriptures which do speak of the sinfulness of sin, or of the Majesty of God, and his terrible Wrath executing judgements upon sinners, all which serve rather to terrifie a poor drooping Soul then to comfort it, but let him rather Meditate upon those Scriptures which do speak of the merciful nature of God, of the full satisfaction of Christ, and of his great love to poor sinners, as to Paul, Manasses, Mary Magdalen, and some such other*

other great sinners whom God hath pardoned.

5. Let your meditations be suitable to the Ordinances that you are to be made partakers of, as if you are to receive the Sacrament, *Then meditate upon your preparatory, concomitant and subsequent duties: Meditate upon the love of God the Father, upon the love of God the Son, Jesus Christ, consider the excellency of his person, the greatness of his sufferings, and how valid they be to the satisfaction of Gods Justice, and so likewise to consider of the excellency, nature, and use of the Sacrament: So if thou hast a Child to be baptized, consider the Duties and promises of belonging to that Ordinance, the Duties thereof belonging to thee for the present, but to the Child for the future.*

6. The Scripture is not to be meditated on as it is to be read:
There

There is no part of the Scripture but what is to be read by us, but there is a great deal of Scripture which cannot be a fit Subject for us to meditate upon, but such as I shall mention, though there be many parts of Scripture besides, which may be fit proper Subjects for us to meditate upon, but these most especially, as the *Psalms of David*, many Chapters of the *Proverbs of Solomon*, some choice places of the *Canticles*, most of the *Holy Gospels*, and most of the *Epistles*, Something of the *Revelation*, and then all promises in general, and that for two Reasons, The one is, because the Promises themselves put us upon the Duty, and then the promises bring Comfort; Far be it from us to despise the Consolations of our heavenly Lord: Meditate also upon the holy and blessed Commands of God, and the Examples of Saints; and let this be
your

your Meditation to say thus within your selves, *Why should Abraham love God, or David love God more then I? Why should the Angels love God more then I? God hath forgiven me thousands of Iniquities and transgressions, but never forgave the Angels one.* When thou readest holy Examples of the Old Testament, you may see that not only such and such things are feasible, but that with far less help it was done, then now we in these Gospel times have to do it with.

7. Let Christ be very much the Subject of your Meditation, when I consider the whole business of the Worship of God from the beginning of the World to Christ, and how God doth acquiesse in Christ, and that the highest Angels desire to know him.

I fully conclude, that Christ is wonderfully worthy, to take
up

up our thoughts, our chiefest love,
and our greatest joy, so that the
question will not be, whether
Christ be worthy of our love, but
rather whether our love be wor-
thy of Christ, and as the other, so
this is unquestionable and of doubt,
that it is not.

Instances



Instances
O F
Solemn Divine
MEDITATION.

Meditation I.

A Las my God, I am in a sad condition, mine afflictions grow daily upon me, and that which is mine unsupportable misery, my corruptions grow faster upon me then my affliction; What before made me weep will not now make me sigh; The heavy burthen of a great abomination doth not lie upon me so much
as

as before I was oppressed with a vain thought in my prayers : Alas Lord, alas, I am undone, alas my Corruptions have almost made me love them, and make me weary of Duties, and careless of Graces, My joyes are gone , and my sorrows are gone that were suitable to thy Word, and now my joys are but the laughter of Fools, and my sorrows are Carnal, Sensual, and more of Hell in them then of Heaven, and as now I can scarce tel my sorrows, so have I scarce any sorrow to tell; I have sate down and wept to consider the great decayes of holiness in me , but now I can see my God going from me, and when as now he is even out of sight, mine eyes are as dry as my heart is hard; Alas Lord if thou wilt not return, thou wilt lose a poor Soul that hath loved thee , and is somewhat troubled; Now poor sad Soul that it is so wicked as it is.

Medi-

Meditat. II.

Lord, thou seest the strange distempered temper of mine heart and Spirit, ah blessed God. I should take more comfort if I should see my heart blood running forth before mine eye, then to see mine eyes so dry and my heart so hard, I have worn out almost all Motives to holiness, they now take no impression in me which before were too strong for me to bear, they ravish me which now do not move me: I scarce ever go to Prayer but I have enough and too many Spiritual complaints to employ it to express; If every day I had not just cause to bewail a continued decay of Grace, I might have some respite of my griefs: But what shall I now do? When every day shall bear witness against me, and every night my sin shall go to bed with me,

me, and lie in my bosome, and rise in the morning more strong then at night : *Ab when my former holy life shall be more terrible then others wicked lives ; when my former prayers shall be like the Gall of Asps unto me , VWhen those Duties which should be my comfort are my terrour : Alas what can my poor Soul do ? when my present sins, and my past duties , which of them are the heaviest burthen unto me, I do not know , what shall I do ? When I consider these things, then the thoughts of the affliction that lies upon me makes me weep a tear or two, and my vain heart , my deceitful heart , would perswade me that I weep for my sins : Those in desertion are in a blessed condition to me, they are sad and I am miserable ; I am guilty of that which their Consciences do but accuse them off : Alas, have I my communion with God ? my sweet Communion*

munition, and the power I had to prevail with him for any mercy almost that I prayed for ; now I can pray, and pray , and pray , and go away without a blessing, I can almost be content to be wicked, Thou knowest mine heart , or else my tears would deceive thee as well as me: If they are worldly thoughts that have estranged me from thee, thou knowest how to cure me ; if mine utter impoverishings will cure me, let me be as poor *Job* ; if thou wast not such a Physician as thou art, I was past cure.

Meditat. III.

Lord, I am come now to power out my soul before thee, and my tears in thy bosome, to tell thee the sad thoughts and sorrows of my heart ; Ah my God , in this bitterness of my Soul, and with tears in mine eyes, and pride in my heart,

and

and sencelesness upon my Spirit, I speak these things: Ah Lord, thou hast scourged me with scorpions, for my sins do encrease as well as my afflictions, these afflictions to me are scorpions, to me they have poyson in them, and at once I am scourged and stung with them, a sad case it is when my punishment is heavier than I can bear, and yet notwithstanding I go from the presence of God too, and that more and more. My tears dry up in mine eyes, and my love goes out of my heart as soon as kindled; When the Candle of the Lord shined upon my Tabernacle in my first conversion, when the fire of thy love was kindled in my heart, I have had some discourses, of devotion, that I was not able to bear the ravishment that the remembrance and meditation of them brought to my soul, now almost as full of sadness as then of joy: after those

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times, as those after the Flood; my joyes and the acts and workings of my grace grew very short liv'd in comparison of what they were before; then they were *Methusalems* for age, and *Sampsons* for strength to what they are now; before though I fell spiritually sick, and my strength and comfort was gone, yet I was sensible of my weakness, it was a pain and a grief unto me that I could not walk into the delightful Garden of the Spouse, and to the sweet bed of his Spices; I could weep for want of tears; if not, I could mourn for sorrow, but now like a man that groaned and struggled so long that he can struggle no longer, but grown senceless, can hardly be perceived to breathe or live; If the sweetest Musick should be plaid by him, or the dearest friend in the world should come and ask him with tears in his eyes, *Dear*
Hus

Husband, or Dear Wife, how do you?
the poor sick one doth not so much
as open the eye to see who it is that
speaks, or if open them, they be-
ing presently heavy with death,
fall down again, and he dies; So
is it with my poor Soul sometimes,
I can hear my Saviour as it were
saying unto me (*for sometimes me
thinks I see him about my sick Soul,*)
Ah poor Soul how dost thou do?
Is my Joseph yet living? But alas,
Lord, thou knowest I have scarce
strength or life to lift up mine eye
to thee, Lord, *Can these dry bones
live? Can these dry eyes weep?*
Can this frozen Heart be enfla-
med?

Meditat. IV.

Lord, I am ashamed to consider
what I know of thee, when I think
what I do for thee: Ah my God,
the cares of the world lie heavy
upon me, Resolutions though ne-
ver so strong are too weak to over-

come my corruptions; Alas, *I* can scarce say any more then *I* have said in the confessing and bewailing my sad spiritual condition, though *I* have said nothing to what *I* should say, Have *I* not told thee Lord, with tears in mine eyes, and with a sad heart, that *I* found my Corruptions get ground of me? my prayers, my tears, my resolutions, and some endeavours do resist, but cannot overcome them, these keep them from prevailing so soon, but not from prevailing; *I* humbly confess or desire so to do, that *I* may complain to thee, but *I* should add to mine abominations exceedingly if *I* should complain of thee; Mine heart doth alwayes tempt me to it, when *I* consider what *I* was, and what *I* am, it is a Talent of lead upon my soul, yet since my preaching thou art glorified, and thy people edified more then if *I* should spend all my time

in private Meditation, I am willing to submit, only I do humbly beseech thee with tears in mine eyes, that though I have less time to spend in such private duties, yet that my poor Soul may not lose her love to them, and though I perform fewer duties, I may not perform them worse then I did when I performed more.

Meditat. V.

I do much wonder at my self and at many, nay somewhat at all Christians upon dayes of humiliation, but most at my self to hear the tongue of a poor Christian confessing, and his eyes weeping for his sins, and speaking of them with such expressions and such sighs that one would think Surely this Christian keeps a strict communion with God, surely he would not sin for a world, surely God is in all this mans thoughts: And yet stay but whil'st he hath done his prayer, and

you find in him such strong thoughts, words, and actions, that are almost incredible, loose and idle words, and vain thoughts, I but too often experience it, and makes it even past hope it should be otherwise with me: If any Town that was straightly besieged with cruel enemies, should send for aid to such or such, and when they came they should send out most of the Town to joyn with the enemy against those that came to help them, What should we say of such people! Lord, just thus are we, We have a world of corruptions and temptations, Sin and Hell, and Satan, all beset us, and violently assault us, we pray for the help of God against them, day after day, We send our prayers to heaven for assistance, Well, God doth send his holy Spirit to helpt his poor Soul, in the Ministry of the Word tells us what we should do to overcome these

these enemies, and sending many motions of the Spirit to bring into our souls grace to strengthen us; we will not do what he adviseth us to do, nay, but we take part with our corruptions, and resist and fight against the power of the world to come; O thy patience is not to be understood, I am weary, to think before I go to prayer, how little fruit I expect from them, I pray, and pray, and weep, and hear, and sigh, and confess these as well as other of my sins, and yet as a Ship in the Sea they do divide my corruptions for the present; but they presently return to their former course; Lord do not the bowels of thy compassion yern within thee to see me thy poor Servant in such a miserable condition as I am in? Dost not thou see how sin and corruption do as it were lye gnawing upon me, and eating up my

very flesh, and destroying my soul, and I have neither hand nor foot to move against them? Lord, who is it that must make me hate corruption, is it not thy Spirit? who must overcome my resisting of thy Spirit, is it not thy Spirit? Lord, I do not know in the World what to do, to leave off striving were not only to despair of thy goodness, because thou dost not help as much and when I will, and besides if I cannot get ground, nay, though notwithstanding I lose ground, yet doubtless I shall not go so swiftly down the stream as if I strove not at all: if I must be forsaken by thee to all eternity, yet Lord, let me not while I live so fall that I should be a scandal to Religion; Alas, is it come to this, O my soul, that I must say, if God will forsake me for ever!

Medi-

Meditat. VI.

Since our dear Lord Jesus Christ hath loved me and given himself for me, Oh that my heart was ravisht with his love! Oh that he was the beloved of my soul, and that I were tick of his love who dyed for the love of me! Oh that I could not be stayed but with his flaggons; This my Jesus the chiefest of ten thousand hath told me that he that saw thee, saw the Father, whereby I understand that thou art just as he was, as pittiful, as gracious, as willing to forgive, as sweet and as easie to be entreated as my good Saviour; and in all the things and passages that thy word hath made known to us of him, I read not of one of all that came to him, not one poor soul that ever begged any grace or any pardon, nor never did any come to be healed of any

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bodily

bodily disease in vain ; Lord, thou art as he was, Lord Jesus thou art as thou wast, thy being in Heaven makes thee not less like thy Father, or thy self ; Blessed God, I do beseech thee, to give me, thy poor hard-hearted servant a soft heart ; Lord Jesus I beseech thee (thou seest mine heart, my poor heart desire as imperfectly, as coldly) to make intercession for me, me, for whom thou hast paid a dear price, as one that hath been so long from his Friend hath he can hardly call to remembrance what countenance he hath, So I, poor I, that cannot chuse but pity the sad condition of mine own heart, which though it doth not uncessantly and importunately desire grace as it should, yet methinks it is a sad thing to see it in such a careless temper, I am such a stranger to thee that I have

have much ado to make one thought of thy sweet love and excellencies that may affect my heart, and bring the sweet apprehensions of thee to remembrance. Thy tender mercies and former relishes of thy goodness are to me like the shadow of death, they are as Christ walking upon the waters, they terrifie me; Lord let me weep thee to me again; Oh my God I am undone, undone, undone; a poor undone creature; Those in desertion are in a thousand times better condition then I am, they want the comforts, but then indeed they have the graces of the Spirit, but is not my poor soul that wants both in a sad condition, that can sit down and fall asleep when I should seek my Saviour? I have a soul of such a temper as makes me wonder at my self, as in the Spring, and sometimes there.

there will come a cloud that will seem to overspread the Heavens, and yet on the sudden all will be blown over, and the day so fair that there will not be a cloud to be seen ; So am I, sometimes my heart is full of sorrow, and mine eyes full of tears, and yet upon the sudden, my heart loseth that sweet sad temper, and all is blown over, and not a cloud appears, and these clouds of grief are not dispersed with the comforts and joyes of thy Spirit, but with worldly business or company : when I do grieve for my sins, carnal grief bears a share in it and carnal joy abolisheth it.

Meditat. VII.

To confess my sins without any sense of them, without any hatred of them, to pray for grace, and not to be sensible of the necessity or excellency of it, to come to thine Ordinances without reaping

ing

ing any good from them, to think and meditate of thee, and neither admire nor love thee, nor long and delight to be in thy company, to what purpose are these things? thou desirest of us our hearts and not our works, words, or thoughts, without that : Ah my Lord and my God, shall all be in vain, and wilt thou cast me off for ever ? Dost thou hate my soul, and am I an abomination unto thee ? Must I be shut out for ever, and never enjoy the sweetness of thy presence ? Thou wilt not O my God, thou wilt not, thou canst not O my God, thou canst not, for thou hast made a Covenant with me, and I claim that Covenant, for I have not any thing in world besides thy Covenant in the Lord Jesus Christ, that I can so much as have the least hope that will do me any good : if the Lord Jesus Christ did not sit at thy right hand

hand to make intercession for me my sins continually, daily, hourly clamoring against me, and accusing of me, must needs prevail against me.

Alas my hear is far from that spiritual frame that thou requir-est, for the miseries that sin brings are more troublesome and heavy to me then the filthiness that is in sin; thy blessings are more lovely in my eyes then thy self; Every duty hardens me in my formality; Lord, thou art the father of mercies, Oh have mercy upon me, for my case is not the common case of thy people, but few, few of many, may be found whose soul is like my poor soul, for where is there any that can say so, and yet be so little affected as I am.

Medita.

Meditat. VIII.

Mine hopes are false, and my fears are true, the deadliest poysons do not make me sick, nor the excellentest Cordials do not comfort me; I am not sick of sin, nor doth the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ fill me with joy, nay, rather doth it not fill me with griefs and fears? if my fears and griefs were not Carnal, would they were more, but my Carnal joyes eat out my Spiritual grief, and my joyes also: I am as it were like *Absalom*, I hang between heaven and earth, I would fain have heaven, and yet would not part with earth: Oh my Lord Jesus Christ, art thou of no more excellency in mine eyes? Doth thy love to me raise up no more love in me then to stand deliberating what to do, when thou standest with stretched out arms to receive me to thy bosome? Canst thou

thou love one that loves thee so little as I do? Thou didst love me when I loved thee not at all: Why sittest thou so sad O my Soul? Go cast thy self into the arms and bosome of the Lord Jesus Christ, there lie and hear the beatings of his heart toward thee, and it may be thou maiest be warmed with the heat of his love; Christ pours out the boyling streams of his heart-blood upon thy poor soul, for his hear, boyled in love towards thee, and can thine heart still be frozen? Oh infidelity, thou art the poyson of my Soul, thou with thy cold blasts hast frozen mine heart, and keep'st it so; Lord give me faith, or else all thy mercies are in vain, Thy love is, and hath been too great for me to believe: Lord, thou that lovest me so much as to give me Christ, Oh love me so much as to give me faith to believe it; There remains in
mine

mine heart no more then the first spark of thy love, and the first Principle of grace that thou didst put into my soul when thou didst regenerate me; All the flames are gone out that were once kindled in me: All the Fruit, and Leaves, and Boughs are stript from me, there are all things to doe beside bare regeneration, I am as an arm cut off, so that it hangs only by a little skin, a slender thread; Lord, this is my hope, that my Corruptions and Satan that have quenched these flames that I have had, shall never be able to quench this spark: But alas that is a poor comfort, that this is all my comfort, that I shall not lose heaven, though it be a thousand times too great a comfort for such a wretched sinner as I am, to have: It is nothing to lose all my comforts, all my duties, all my sweet Communion with thee, or at least only so much

much of these remains as to keep me from being utterly cast off; For one that had fared deliciously every day, to come to have no more bread then to keep life and Soul together, though he dies not, yet he hath a miserable life: Thus, thus, and far worle it is with me.

Meditat. IX.

If I stood clear before thee O my God, of those many sins, of senselessness under judgements, fruitlessness under Ordinances, mispending of time, want of watchfulness of mine one wayes, and for the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ; Only my sins of unkindness to the Lord Jesus Christ, were enough to cause thee to take away thy Mercies from me; I have heard and read the great Mystery of my Redemption, of his being Scourged, and Crowned, and Nailed, of his Bleeding and Dying
for

for me, of his great love, and such things, that if a Friend of this world had done or suffered the thousandth part so much, his memory would have been precious.

Meditat. X.

Ah my dear God, thou hast been my God, and therefore thou art my God, how little can my Soul know by any thing that I now either do or feel? I am fain to fetch Evidences and signs from actions done many years since: My prayers and other holy Duties were Matter of more joy when I did them than now; they have terrour in them: Now I think I do them not as heretofore: I have been assisted by thy grace, Oh my lost Joyes and my lost Duties, where I shall find you I know not, the Joyes I had formerly, and the great zeal of mine heart made me pray, but now not out of feeling
and

and zeal, but for zeal and joy, and I go from prayer with a sad heart and a hard heart : My prayers come neither from my heart nor reach to my heart : Oh my Lord Jesus Christ where are thy Motions and the Joyes of thy Spirit to work thine own work in me ? Why do I walk in this Valley of Tears not only without comfort, but without grace, I do even stand astonisht at my self to see the vast difference between my self now and when I was thine ; *When the Candle of the Almighty shone upon my Soul, and the Spirit of my God dwelt in me, then sorrow and weeping flew away : Alas !* I now have scarce any thing left me but carnal tears, and one great cause of my grief and part of my misery is, that I can weep no more; sometimes indeed tears stand in mine eyes when I consider these things; Lord give me Faith, O give me Faith, I feel a deal of Atheism

theism in my heart ; Mine heart is so full of Corruption, of all kind, and all Degrees, that I can feel no bottom of this stinking Ditch ; Mine imagination is divers times a through-fare for Satans blasphemous thoughts, which my Soul abhors, I may even sit down and spend the remainder of my wicked life in weeping and wailing, and wringing of my hands, and tearing off the hairs of my head : *My sad Soul may say to my God*, Art thou quite gone from me, have all my hopes of thee been as dreams and empty shadows unto me , and hast thou shown me so much of heaven, and wilt thou make hell more terrible and bitter to me ? Shall thy sweet Mercies be turned into the Gall of Aspes to me, not only to be bitter but deadly ? *I have cause, I have cause, Lord, to mingle my drink with my tears , to water my couch with weeping* : Thou art too
great

great a God to be dallyed withall, and what do I else? As our dearest Friends, though we never so much delighted in their company while they were living, yet we are afraid to be alone with them, they are a terrour to us after the Souls have left their Earthly Tabernacles; So my prayers while they were living prayers were a great comfort to my poor soul, but now my prayers are without life, and my Supplications are dead, they are a terrour to me, they look gashly upon me, and I upon them.

Meditat. XI.

My dear God, thou art not moved with words, if we had the tongue of Men and Angels, if we could speak as never man spake, if our hearts meant no more than they do, what would our vain words do? I am ever weary of my life because of my Corruptions, I can go no where nor do any thing, but

but my corruptions follow me,
and tire me even out of my pa-
tience : O that I could weep over
my prayers to see how dead they
are , which way to turn I know
not , I have prayed a thousand
times for another heart, and yet
mine heart is as hard as a stone,
and so full of hypocrisie : Lord,
shall I cast away my confidence,
and lay down my weapons, and
put off mine armour, because
my corruptions are so strong and
impetuous , and deaden my very
soul ? But alas what am I wea-
ry of ? not of my sins, but of
the accusations of my conscience.
that will not let me alone ; blef-
sed be thy Name that I am trou-
bled that I do not live holily ;
Lord, mine heart is entangled in
the snares of the world , blessed
Saviour, thou which hast over-
come the world, deliver me from
the cares and love of the world ;
Alas!

Alas what good do my tears do me ? Dost thou bottle up such tears, such puddle water in thy bottles? let the bowels of thy compassion yern within thee towards my poor soul. it is full of sin, but my sin is my sorrow, though my sorrow itself is sinful, if thou standest as a stranger to me I must give over my self for lost, then I may say, farewell prayers ; better to say , farewell, then to add to my former sins a greater guilt by defiling my prayers that are as Chariots to carry out my soul into the bosome of God ; What am I to stand against corruption or temptations ? I am no more able to overcome, nay, to resist them, than to remove Mountains. I have sinned away my joyes, and sinned away mine hopes, and even my God, if thy mercies be not greater , and what remains for my poor soul to do, but to
fit

fit down in sorrow , and even to mourn until my Soul be heavy unto Death ? It had been better for me that I had not been one to shew the way to others: Nay, but Oh my God , that is best for me that thou hast done for me ; Blessed God, do but make me thine.

Meditat. XIII.

In the most serious addressees of my Soul to take hold upon God , I find an unhappy frozenness be-
num the best of my Devotions, and thereby I shew either that I am extreamly ignorant of thee Lord, or what is worse , senseless of thee ; The truth is I may justly tremble when I come to keep any day of Humiliation in thy sight , not only because of the desperate sins I am guilty of, but especially because such Duties do work little or nothing upon me , and this is sure enough, that those Ordinances that do not soften , do harden ; I

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am in a great straight, my Conscience drives me upon Duties, and I dare not omit them, and yet my heart is so hard and filthy that they do not purifie me, So I am more defiled than before: Ah my God, thou knowest what afflictions are bitter and strong enough to purge these Corruptions; Lord, send them, and though I am so vile that I do not now fervently and earnestly enough desire to be cured, but yet Lord I know my want of desires of Reformation is one of my greatest Corruptions, I desire to be cured of that, or at least Lord, thy Fatherly goodness I hope will take care to cure me of that, and Lord, this I know, that when thou shalt send any such affliction upon me, I shall it is too likely Murmure and be weary of the Chastisement of the Lord; it may be I shall pray for the taking off of that Corrosive before it hath eaten away that deadness

ness of heart and other corruptions that now lie upon me, yet Lord do not yield to such prayers, go on with thy Cure, and if I be impatient, cure that corruption also, and every other corruption that shall appear in the time of cure of any corruption: I shall bless thee one day for not hearing, and not granting such prayers as shall be for my spiritual harm: Lord, Death is very bitter unto me, surely it would not be so bitter, if there were no Root of bitterness in me; if I kept a stricter communion with thee in this world, I should long for a full communion with thee in heaven for ever.

Meditat: XIII.

Alas, Oh my soul, may not I justly spend the remainder of my dayes in sighing, to perceive my good, from whose presence I have in former times had so much grace and comfort, to be such a stranger

now to me, and what is worse,
mine heart so senseless of his absence!
The time hath been when my heart
hath almost bled within me to
think what a miserable condition
I should be in, if ever it should come
to pass that it should be thus; Lord,
why dost thou absent thy self from
my poor soul? If *I* were in a deser-
tion of comforts, *I* were in a far
better condition, but to be in a de-
sertion of Graces and not to be
troubled, is a sad condition: Me
thinks *I* see my stock of grace grow
weaker and weaker, and more and
more to languish, as one that is
dying, the pulse grows weaker and
weaker, until at last it be no more.
O Lord, what to say, *I* do not
know; alas! *I* cannot but call, and cry
& pray, Lord if ever thou wilt take
pity upon a poor Miserable speech-
less Sinner; Lord, if thou wilt
that *I* may overcome, Lord, *I* cannot
get my heart to be content to be
damned

damned, and indeed since then I must eternally be separated from thee, I do not desire to get mine heart to be content, but to struggle against it as long as I am able.

Meditat. XIV.

To have Satan and Corruption come and beset me as soon as I awake, and to follow me all the day long, and go to bed with me, and to keep me waking, to have no respite, is a sad condition: When I should awake with my God, my good God, who kept me, and watched over me whilst I slept; to have Satan stand ready, and hold his Temptations before mine eyes which way soever I look, and to prevail so far with me, as at last to make me scarce to hate the sin he tempts me to: I feel in my Spiritual part an utter abhorring of the Sin, I would give ten thousand Worlds rather than com-

mit the Sin, and yet I have much
ado to refrain ; alas, can my secure
soul live ?

Meditat. XV.

I am in such a wretched temper
as to be willing to offend my God,
and when I go about to grieve,
sorrow is far from me ; nay, the
grief which sometimes I feel, is
not strong enough to conquer the
temptation, when tears stand in
mine eyes to consider the miserable
condition of my Soul in being so
prone to Sin, the Temptation en-
creaseth ; To hear one of thy ser-
vants groaning under thy hand, and
then to stand parlying with temp-
tation, and not rather be afraid
that the same affliction, &c. Lord,
I am in thy hand, for affliction,
lay what thou wilt upon me, I
must bear it, and I would bear it
patiently ; nay Lord, though this
Temptation be such an unwelcome
guest,

guest, and *I* am two weary of it, yet so thou wilt give me grace to overcome my impatience, *I* am content Lord as much as *I* can; but alas my God, to have Satan my Companion instead of my God, *I* hope will never be pleasing to me.

Meditat. XVI.

Lord, what vain heart thinks of thee it matters not, except it be to discover the wretchedness of it, thou hast more glorious Creatures to praise thee: my praises, and my thoughts of thee are so low and so unworthy of thee, that thou mightest forbid me as thou didst the Devils to confess thee, or to say any thing of thee: My dear God, if a World would buy it for one such sight of thee as might so ravish my Soul, that *I* might never more see any beauty, or taste any sweetness in any thing but in thee, that *I* might see thee with open face, that *I* might be transformed

into thy image from glory to glory:
Lord, thou art still beyond me, the
higher my thoughts are of thee the
more thou art beyond me and a-
bove me; when my thoughts are
best, my thoughts are lost in the
meditation of thee, as the stone
that is thrown into the calm Sea,
makes greater and greater circles,
but can never reach the shoar:
Lord, I am content I may be
lost in my self so I may find thee,
Lord, though there were none
but thou and I in the world, I
had enough, nay, though there
were none but thou and I in
Heaven, I had enough, enough;
Though I have nothing to say to
thee but what I have said a thou-
sand times, Thou art my God, my
Saviour, my all, thou art he whom
my soul loveth; yet though I have
nothing else to say, nor case there
is any new relish, yet I delight to
be

be alone with thee: nay, though thou saist nothing to my poor soul but what *I* have heard from thee, yet let me still be in thy company: *I* had rather weep and mourn for mine offending thee, then enjoy all delights in the world; Those salt waters are more precious then their Wine.

Meditat. XVII.

Lord, *I* beseech thee to order all mine affairs by thy wisdom, thou knowest what afflictions are needful for me; *I* murmur oftentimes when thou afflictest me, although *I* have again and again desired thee to direct all things that belong unto me: but blessed God, let not my Murmurings so provoke thee as to leave me to mine own self; Give me not what *I* desire but what *I* want, my judgement in judging what is good or bad for me is little worth; for many times *I* have judged such a thing to be for

my hurt, yet it hath proved much for my good, and so on the contrary, but then *I* have by experience found it evidently for my good, when *I* have yielded my self wholly to be guided by thee, all things Lord make me know my self; *I* am a poor Creature with teares in mine eyes, and hypocrisie in my heart.

Meditat. XVIII.

Lord, it fares with me as it fares with one that hath been a long time from his friend, he hath many things to tell him of, several particulars that befell him since their last being together, so Lord, *I* have been a stranger to thee, and *I* have much to say to thee, much have *I* suffered from mine own corruptions, and little have *I* done; *I* have a heart will let me do nothing for thee; Lord, *I* am but a Child, pardon my babblings; *I* have none to make my complaint to, no
not

not one; *Thou hast caused me to live in Mesech, and to have my habitation in the Tents of Kedar, and if thou Lord wilt supply the want of those Christian friends I am now deprived of, Lord, my heart is so deceitful, that I have much a do to know whether I ever was, or am yet thine: I know Lord how I have spent dayes, sometimes whole weeks together in Prayer, and Meditation, and reading Devotional Bookes to Prepare my self for the Communion, and yet then I had gross failings, for there was a World of Covetousness in me, and thirsting after Humane Learning exceedingly, and little prizing the knowledge of Christ in my Sermons, I did little aim at thy glory but to preach my self: Now in these things I find some healings, but my duties are fewer, and now there is far more wanting in comparison of what I should be, then*
was

was then, of what *I* am now : Nay Lord, thou only knowest *I* shall be a gainer: but alas ! if now *I* am alone *I* shall have no more fire of thy love then *I* had when *I* lived in the midst of Glowing Coals of Devotion, how can *I* but go out now, since *I* had much ado to burn then ? When *I* think of serving thee, then my heart is so perverse as to put in a Carnal Motive , and saith, *If thou dost so, then God will bless thee in such or such a temporal blessing, and my heart closeth with that Motive.*

Meditat. XIX

O my God, as thou art my Father, so let me know that thy love to me being known by me, may put Wheels to my Obedience, that now goes so heavily, & that it may make mine obedience more pure that now is so full of insufficiency: *I* am fain to be glad almost of any Motive to make me serve thee , but yet it
is

is my burthen that fear should make me do that which love should make me do, for besides that such obedience is painful, that which is worse, it is impure also : Alas, I am a stranger too much unto thee, and in being so, an enemy to my self; Lord this is the first day I have given thee this great while, it doth appear it is so by the poor and weak duties I perform; my poor soul is like a poor desolate Widow that hath lost her dear Husband, every one trampleth upon her, and oppresseth her.

Meditat. XX.

Lord, where are those sweet embraces and manifestations of thy love, that thou hast bestowed on me in former times? when I have gone unto the treasury of thy mercies, and fetched any mercy from thence that I wanted. Thou hast given unto my prayers my dear
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Brother, who went forth a blasphemer, or at least a common swearer, and came home, I seeking thee for him, a convert, after thou gavest me his life and the life of my Mother, and indeed Lord, what was it but I had of thee? thou didst almost miraculously restore one of my Sisters to comfort : But now when I cry and shout thou shuttest out my prayers, and art almost as if I never had any acquaintance with thee : Lord, I know that the fault is mine own, indeed Lord I then was scarce ever from thee, or out of thy thoughts : For were I but as I have been, so often keeping dayes of humbling before thee ; it could not be that my duties should be such as they are, but Lord thou seest the tears these thoughts cause me to shed, they are thine, do thou encrease them, but take away this dulness and deadness of heart that is the just reason

son why I shed them, and if thou shalt once purifie and inflame mine heart by faith and love, I shall shed abundant more tears for my wandring thoughts in prayer, then now I do, for all the abominations I am guilty of; Alas, Lord, the ordinary dayes of thy Saints are far more holy then the dayes I set apart for special service of thee; and their thoughts in the midst of their worldly busineses, are more devout and zealous then my thoughts in my prayers, were alwayes with thee: I scarce did any thing, though almost of never so small Moment, but the reason why I did it this or that way, was, because it was some way or other more for thy glory: Lord, it is not thy fault, for thou dost wait to shew Mercy, whether my wretched heart will consent to it or no: This I do set down as an infallible truth, and let all the world give thee

thee the glory of it, all thy ways are holy, just and good, and thou dost stretch out thine arms to embrace us, it is our fault that we do not run into thy bosome, the infidelity and other corruptions that are in our bosomes, make us think that thou art not willing to receive us, or imbrace us; and so we not coming, we want that experimental knowledge of thee, that would (if we had it) make us not so timorous of coming to thee as we are.

Meditat. XXI.

Before I begin to write, I know I have more cause to Write in blood, or tears, then in ink; *Can a Mother forget her Child?* It is not, *Can a Child forget the Mother?* nor is it, Can a Mother her Child, if the Child forget her? or, Can there be any case wherein the Mother can forget her Child? Lord, do thou awaken my heart for it is asleep,

asleep ; Lord , do thou raise mine heart, for it is dead ; Do thou thaw my heart, for it is frozen ; Lord, thou art that Celestial fire that enflames all thine Angels with love , I have no way but to come before thy presence in hope that at the last shall be thawed , if not inflamed , *thou wilt not put out the smoaking snuff of a Candle, I am such an one,* enlightned and enflamed , though now I send forth nothing but an unfavoury stench : What , shall I stand imperfect as *I* am thus speaking, what *I* may, and what *I* have to say, to my God, Lord, *Thou hast commanded in thy Word, that if an Adulterer defile a Woman, and she cry not out , then he shall be put to death :* Lord , Infidelity , Hypocrisie , and Vain-glory are come to undo me, to defile my Soul , and they have almost perswaded my Soul not to cry out ; To be ravished is a great affliction , but to
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embrace the Adulterer is an abomination.

If I cry to Men for succour, if I go to Ordinances, Alas the Adulterer is a strong Man, he hath locked the Doors of my Soul, and none can break them open but thou only : Lord, do not thou stand knocking at the Door of my heart, for the strong man will not, and I am kept so fast by my corruptions, I cannot come to let thee in; Lord, break open the Doors, and come in to help me before I am utterly undone, as it was with the Levites Concubine, so will it be with my poor Soul, Corruption after Corruption, and Sinne after Sinne, will so abuse her, that she will be at last dead: Alas! methinks I look upon my poor Soul as one looks upon a Ship tossed among Rocks in the Seas, one sees it, and pities it, but knows not how to help it; there comes a
Wave

Wave, and carries it with violence amongst the mid'st of the Rocks, and makes it reel and stagger like a drunken Man, and then all in the Ship are fain to pump and toil to save their lives, at last it was dash't in pieces, and all fain to get upon broken pieces of the Ship to swim to the shore, if it may be: My Soul is even labouring for life; Lord, what wilt thou do? wilt thou be as a Man astonish't, and as a Mighty Man that cannot help? then I am undone, then I may say if thou wilt not, then farewell all my Duties, farewell all my Graces, and all my Comforts which I have had in the dear embraces of my God: Ah, must I not pray but with my Tongue? Must I have no more Comforts but what poor Creatures can give me? Lord, if I must perish, let me perish in thy way, let me convert many unto thee; Though I know my Damnation shall be greater

ter if I perish for living so contrary to mine owne Doctrine: Lord, I am a poor Miserable Man, and a more Miserable Christian, thou art, I cannot possibly imagine what, but I hope Lord, I shall know; these dayes of ignorance and sin will not alwayes last; when my change comes, I shall nomore sin and repent, and repent, and sin, as I do now: Oh my corruptions I hope one day I shall leave you all in the Grave behind me; The day is coming, when while I am praising God you shall not come and lie as a Talent of Lead upon my Soul; and hinder my flight, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly, Come while my Soul is filled with joy to think of thy coming*; O my God, thou art enough for me, for my Soul can hold no more; Lord, I am afraid of the joyes sometimes I have to think of thee, Tears for my sins are fitter for me then tears of joy, yet

yet I dare not refuse them, nay, I cannot if I would, they are so sweet, so sweet; Heaven is but a greater Measure of them; Lord, thou art enough, enough for them that love thee.

Meditat. XXII.

To see a dead Man arrayed with all the Richest Clothes, still there is more horreur to behold him then delight; So my poor Soul looks gashly in all the Duties I perform, I have a cold and dead soul for all them, and more terrour there is in the deadness then there is comfort in the Multitude of them, this I know by experience; yet Christ is not sweet unto me, My dear Saviour, to whom I was so dear: Lord Jesus give me a heart that may feel thy sweetness, I am convinced that thou art so, but my poor heart hath not enough tasted the sweetness of this Truth, *That*
all

all things are Dross and Dung in comparison of Christ: Lord here is Mine Estate, Mine Health, My Life, My Liberty, and all that I have, and had I more, I would freely give all; give but such a heart as I desire, and the same will I consecrate unto thee in Spiritual affections all my dayes: now I think thus with my self, When I was most desirous of, and addicted to Humane Learning, it was wonderful delightful to me to be instructed in some new truth, or to have some difficult question clearly resolved; To read the Mathematicks was wonderful delightful, because they prove such strange things, then I have recourse to the Word of God, and by that I am assured that all the Treasures of Wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, and in his Gospel, then further I have recourse to the experience of the people of God in the Word of God,
and

and in particular to *Paul*, who being a Learned Man, yet accounted all things as *Dross and Dung in comparison of Christ*; I have also recourse to the experience of several godly persons I know, of the abundant sweetness, and excellency of the knowledge of Christ, therefore Lord though I have not at this present the power and ravishing feelings of Christs Excellency, yet assuring my self all these wayes whereby I fully do assent to that truth, *That it is life eternal to know thee, and Jesus Christ*: I do beseech thee, O Lord to give me a fuller knowledge of thee in Christ; I beseech thee, I beseech thee, Let not my undervaluing of this knowledge cause thee to deny it, I shall more value it, if I had more of it: Lord, I know if thou shouldest look in me and my life, to see what thou canst find to hinder the granting of this request, thou maist find enough;

enough; nay, I that know my self not so well as thou dost, know enough, and enough, nay, I know nothing to move thee in my self, except something I have had from thee, those things I have so abused, that I know they may be swift witnesses against me: But Lord, if thou shouldest give me this knowledge of them, I might do great things for thee; Lord hear me: Alas, Lord, my desires to know Christ do even die, while I am praying to know him; Alas, Lord, such an heart as I have is fit for none but thee, for none in the world can tell what to do with it, but thou only; *It is past the skill of all in Heaven and Earth but thee, it is not in the power of Ordinances and Duties, if thou shouldst not set in.*

I would pity the Soul of my greatest Enemy, if I should see it in such continual storms & troubles as are in mine, there are new corruptions

tions appear, such as I may term them nothing so fitly as sparks of of the fire of Hell, to have ones heart rise against God, when the continual desire of ones soul and prayer is, that one might be inflamed with the love of God; Lord, while I am working my heart to a serious thought of thee, endeavouring to have my heart full of admiration of thee, and affiance in thee, before I pray unto thee, that if it may be my prayers may be as an Arrow drawn up to the head, but when I go about to pray, and send up my petitions, my thoughts of thy Glory and Goodness slack, and it fares with me, oh my Soul, as sometimes it doth with one that is tying knots, when one hath pulled the first very hard, yet it slacks before one can tye the second; if I keep but a strict communion with thee, and did as thou desirest, (Lord, why shouldst thou desire

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us alwayes to be with thee, how should we be acquainted with thee far more then we are, and if we knew thee more, how should we love thee more; and if we loved thee more, how should we know thee more? For thou revealest thy self to them that love thee; Alas! O my Soul, why should not we alwayes be with God, since he gives us leave? *How gracious art thou to invite such sinners as we are to come to thee!* For thee to wash our souls clean with the *Immaculate* blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; Alas, Lord, I am Mine own enemy, nay, I see it and know it, and it cannot be otherwise: Lord, I am so tired out with my corruptions, that I am even weary of my life, and almost weary of my Duties; Lord, even at this present, how when my soul was so troubled that mine eyes were ready to weep, there comes a thought of a poore worldly

less

worldly business into my Soul, and my thoughts and sorrows for heavenly Matters are gone !

Meditat. XXIII.

O my God, how coldly without love, how doubtingly without faith do I call thee my God ! Lord, how careless am I in thy service ? how very careless ? *How long Lord, bely and true, shall I be thus laden with corruptions ?* Nay, which is my greatest Misery, I am not but very little sensible of my own vile-ness, that makes me that I do not hunger after righteousness. Blessed Lord, I do humbly prostrate my Soul before thee, and do with all the weak power of my soul importune the Merits of my dear Saviour ; I pray thee to look upon me in Mercy : When the poor wounded Man that went from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, lay half dead, and speech- less in the way, though he was not

sensible of his Misery, yet the good Samaritan was; though in his Tongue did not, could not, call for pity, yet his wounds opened their Mouthes wide, and spake aloud to the Samaritan, *Though his eyes shed no tears, yet his heart wept blood at his wounds, and mov'd compassion.* Like to that poor wounded Man I am, so weak, so sick, that I am scarce sensible of mine own desperate condition; Lord, though my heart be not full of love, it is full of wounds; Lord, thou knowest my Miseries, I humbly beseech thee to pity me, not according to my Prayers, but according to My Wants. Lord, that I do not desire to serve thee, that I do not hunger nor thirst after righteousness, it is the greatest Misery that I have.

Meditat. XXIV.

Oh how terrible is the thought of Death to me, is it not so much

for want of Faith as holiness, and indeed I find that *I* can never with comfort think on death, but when I have liv'd very holily before, for what will Faith in that case help Me, without holiness? for *Faith without holiness, is not faith but presumption*: Oh how sweet! how dear! how excellent a thing is holiness? Oh how full of peace and joy is my Soul, when I am full of that? and yet Lord, how careless am *I* of thy service? how many times in the day when I might think of thee without any hindrance of My Studies, do I choose rather to think of vanity? O wean my Soul, O God, from every thing that is not thee. Fill my heart with thy self, dwell in me, my dear God! *Why do I call thee dear?* when I prefer every trifle before thee, O most glorious Lord God, whom ten thousand Worlds cannot sufficiently praise, nor love, which

art thy self, and canst be no more ,
nor canst be no less; how easie Lord,
is it for thee to change My Heart,
Mine heart of Stone for an Heart
of Flesh : Lord, as long as I have
this heart of stone, there is no hope
that I should serve thee with any
cheerfulness, or any constancy; Lord,
hear my prayer.

Meditat: XXV.

O blessed God, if the way of
thy Providence be such , that thou
wilt not give so much Grace as to
make me, through the abundance
of it, almost whether *I* will or no,
to serve thee, yet to whom thou
dost give so much grace as to desire
more grace , O let not this desire
which is of thy own infusing; be in
vain , if there be any thing in the
whole world that I desire more
then thy grace, then let me want
grace to desire it any more ; Lord,
if the reason why thou deniest
my

my prayer, be, because I do not desire as I ought, I humbly beseech thee to grant that I ask aright; alas my afflictions lie heavier on me then ever they did, and I am more wicked, or at least less holy then ever since my conversion I was; how little am I affected with any thing that belongs to thy service, nor yet doth it affect me that I am not affected: Lord, if there were any in heaven or in earth that could help me besides thee, then considering my Manifold Sins, I should; I but Lord, I would not, thy Mercies are so great, go to any other: Now Lord, now is the time to have Mercy upon me; I am like the Man that went from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, wounded, naked, and half dead, I cannot call for help, O let my wounds move thee to compassion; if I could bewail my sinful Misery with tears of Repentance, I know thou wouldest

deliver me, but I cannot weep, nay, hardly mourn; Oh faint, faint is my grief, and cold is my love? What wilt thou do, Lord, with one that scarcely from his heart desires to serve thee: Alas, what canst thou do for me more or less, then to make me desire to serve thee! Accept I must, or for ever be lost: What a low degree of goodness am I come unto? a soul full of sadness, and empty of goodness; To morrow, Lord, I am to receive thee into my Soul, thee my blessed Saviour: Lord, thou knowest I did not use to have a heart so empty of goodness, when I expected thee to come next day.

Meditat. XXVI.

Lord, now I do resolve to serve thee, and in this particular especially; I will not speak evil of any man what injury soever he doth me, Now I will so watch over my words, that I will not offend with
my

my Tongue, And that by degrees
I may attain some perfection herein,
I here vow every week between
this and the next Communion to
keep one day so strictly, that *I* will
not, during that day, speak so much
as one idle word that day, if *I* do,
I will give to the poor. Lord, how
excellent is thy service? so pure,
so sweet; *O that there were such a*
heart in me, that I might for ever
serve thee.

Meditat. XXVII.

When *I* read the Story of the
Martyrs, *I* do wish that *I* had liv-
ed in those dayes, that *I* might
also die as they did; or methinks
I could now willingly lay down my
life, rather then yield to the abo-
minable Idolatry, and Superstitions
of the Sea of Rome; but when *I*
search & try my heart, *I* much fear
that the reason of this my de-
fire is, because *I* think it easier to
lay down my life for Christs sake,

then for his sake to overcome my corruptions; for it being but one act, though it hath more pain, yet being but of small continuance, it is less trouble, then all my life long to fight against sin; and thus I do ill even in my best wishes, in divers respects; For I chose *Martyrdom*, not because thereby I might more honour God, but that I might the sooner and easier come to heaven; And again, that I think I might content my self though I did not so much hate corruption, if I died a *Martyr*, all would be well; whereas *Though I give my body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it would profit nothing, and to love God, it is impossible for him that doth not hate, and fight against his corruptions: Alas, O my Soul, how weary are we of our Spiritual Fight, and we would fain find some other way to Heaven, then by the continu-*
ance

ance of it ; O that I were dead to the World ? yet while we know something better, we shal not think so ; We talk much of the Vanity of the World , but who believes that the World is *Vanity and vexation of Spirit* ? Or who is sensible of this Truth ? Or if he were sensible of it, and sometimes affected with it, yet it soon wanisheth, and we do not live accordingly , How much easier is it to speak like an Angel, then live like a Saints !

Meditat. XXVIII.

Lord, that thou wouldest do it for me take my Soul and my Body, what shall I do with them any longer ? I govern them so ill, and indeed am so unable to govern them, that they govern me ; Lord, if thou shalt condemn me at the last Day, I do now justify thee, and testifie to all the world.

world that thou art just, though then (if such a time shall come) I shall blaspheme thee ; My dear God, I have yet a spark of thy love, I will not leave that small hold of thee for ten thousand Worlds ; I know , Lord , there is no dallying with thee : What if I spoke with the Tongue , and writ with the Pen of Men and Angels ? it is nothing ; Lord , take a poor soul at his word, Lord, I am thine, and do now give my self , and ten thousand Worlds if I had them, to thee ; yet when thou dost take from me some poor part of my Estate, I murmur ; Alas, I have a poor weak heart.

Meditat. XXIX.

Lord, my knowledge of thee is but small, and that which is, is but little Spiritual or Experimental ; To know thee by what others write and say of thee, is sweet to them that can set their Seal to it
from

from their own experience ; Lord, what is it that hath kept me so long from thee, or kept thee so long from me ? I know that I have been wanting to thee, and to my self ; Lord, take my heart, I have too much love for any besides thee ; though I have too little for thee : Oh how sweet are the thoughts of thee, and would be sweeter, if I thought oftner, and longer, and more attentively of thee : Alas, I am almost grown out of acquaintance with thee ; I do not perceive my corruptions in any thing more then in this, that though to think of thee be a thing so easie and so profitable, yet I think so seldom : My dear God, deliver me from the business of the World, Suits of Law, and such things, they undo me ; they take up my thoughts that I cannot be rid of them, I feel upon me the curse which thou threatnest upon the people
of

of Israel, *If they wou'd not serve thee with joy, they should serve strangers with a great deal of bardship*: I was well while I was with thee, then I had my Songs in the night, *now my dayes are turned into the shadow of Death*: Lord, draw me, draw me, make the cords of thy love stronger, or rather then I should perish, make the cords of thine afflictions stronger, and if I murmur, scourge me while I leave murmuring; How true do I finde that saying, *He that injures, forgives not*; My wickedness I have committed against thee, makes me not able to believe almost that thou art, or canst be reconciled unto me: When I should do more for thee, and less against thee, *I shall easilier believe thy loves, or rather when thy Spirit shall shed abroad thy love in my heart*; I shall know thou lovest me, *I sigh and Mourn, and Weep over my*
poor

poor Soul, but cannot help it :
Dear Lord, Let My Tears prevail with thee ; Pity, pity, have pity upon a poor languishing Soul that is even gasping out his last breath ; It grieves me to see what a sad condition *I* am in, *I* am not yet in Hell, and by thy Mercy *I* may never come thither, but *I* am running thither ; *Who is me that I am constrained to live in Mesekh, and to have my habitation in the Tents of Kedar.*

Meditat. XXX.

Lord, I pray for Mercies, and when I have them, to see the unsuitableness of my Spirit to them, and mine unthankfulness for them, brings more sadness upon me then to want them ; All the things *I* begged of thee for temporal Mercies, both in carrying me forth and bringing me home, and concerning my business *I* went about
not

not finding things in such a sad condition at home, yet my poor heart is the same still, and is as hard, and as stony, not willing to yield it self, and all up to thee, as if I were more able to order matters then thou. Now my heart is subject to murmur that it is so hard when it should mourn: Lord thou hast done enough to justify thy love, and thy tender compassions to me, if thou shouldest never do more, and not only thy justice could not be blamed, but not thy Mercy.

Medit. XXXI.

Accept of my poor prayers and when at the last day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be known, the hypocrisie and cold- and my Desires shall be known, and thy goodness shall be admired in hearing such prayers as mine are: For the light of thy Countenance to shine upon, and the Breathings of thy Spirit to blow upon.

upon a Garden of Spices, is not so much for the advancement of thy Free-grace, as for thee to shine upon, and thy Spirit to breath upon such a Dunghil as I am, that sends forth such noisome savours as I do: Lord, if thou wilt be my God, I have a body and a soul, I will give thee them; 'Tis true, they are thine already, but alas, if I had any thing to give that were not thine, I would; but I have not.

Meditat. XXXII.

Lord, I wait to see the day of my Salvation, and the hour when thou wilt shew me thy loves, and when I shall lie in thy bosome and arms and hear the beatings of thy heart in love, and the soundings of thy bowels towards me, and know thy everlasting thoughts of love to me, when thou shalt seal the pardon of my sinnes to me, and make me read thee Counter-

terpain of the Covenant of love between thee and me, which thou reserveſt in Heaven, and is fair and not blotted as mine is, and when ſhall the day of the love and joyes of my Eſpouſals return, and my thoughts be ſwallowed up in love! Lord, why ſhouldeſt thou withhold thy love, the Maniſtations of thy love? Can thy love be concealed from thy Beloved? *I will wait for the Discoveries of thy love, I am loth to do any thing before thou comest whom my ſoul loveth, for fear thou ſhouldeſt come when I am not looking for thee, and thou eſcapeſt me. I look every Prayer to ſee thee come leaping on the Mountains, and ſkipping upon the Hills, as a Roebuck or an Hind; But I ſee thee not, Why doſt thou put a Spark of Love into my heart; If thou wilt leave me, why didſt thou caſt thy Mantle upon me, and when I*
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low after thee, say, what hast thou done? thy loves are better then *Wine, sweeter then honey, even more to be desired then life it self*; Lord, if the small Sparks and relishes of thy Love be so sweet to me, what will the feeding on this heavenly Manna be? If a drop of thy love be so sweet? what will the overflowing be? If thy smiles bring so much joy, what will thy embraces do? Lord, I long till I am undone with thy love; All my carnal and Worldly Joyes undone. Lord, it is not my unworthiness that should hinder me, nor will hinder me from bestowing; *Lord, help my unbelief*; VVell Lord, if I must walk in darkness and see no light, yet give me thy Grace that I may stay my self upon my God, My life is but short, and when the hour of my departure shall come, then I shall enjoy him whom my Soul loveth,
and

and know as I am known ; then I shall forget the sorrows , pains and throws of my travel , for the joy that shall be revealed. My Bride saith come , and the Spirit saith Come : Come Lord Jesus , Come quickly.

Meditat. XXIII.

I wait for the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, if thy love be as fire in straw, or such like matter, lie smoaking , and makes ones eyes weep while one strives to find the fire ; at last it being able to hold no longer, breaks forth into a great flame ; and the longer it is before it discoversit self, the greater is the flame and light when they do break forth : Lord, whilst I am looking for thy love , thou makest me weary , let the length of thy stay be made up by the fulness of thy Presence , and Greatness of thy Manifestations when thou comest ; I seek thee in my Prayers,
and

and I say, O where art thou whom my soul loveth, and yet thou sendest me away weeping and mourning: I seek on my bed when I awake in the night, but I find thee not; I speak with those which have found thee, and they tell me, nay; I know it by thy word, that thou art near to every soul that seeks thee; and when a poor soul cries, thou wilt answer it, then I multiply my prayers, and call lowder, and yet my prayers are as the wind that passeth away, and returns no more; O my Lord and my God, thy love was strong enough to suffer, and thou didst suffer, and thou didst die, that thou mightest make known and commend thy love unto the Sons of Men, and now thou hast done all this to manifest thy love, and wilt thou hide it from me? Creature-love hath wrought strange in me, I have never been weary of their discourses and humane

mane learning, how hath it made me raviſht with ſome learned ſaying: and if thou wouldeſt diſcover thy love, and ſhed that abroad in my heart, certainly it would work wonders: For the Creatures flames of love are but as a blaze that ſtraw makes, but is ſoon out, it hath not ſubſtance enough to nourish and maintain what it begets; For Creature-Excellencies are not ſtrong enough to keep up the delight we take in them; but thou Lord art love, and thou art ſuch a treasure of excellencies that the poor ſoul makes new diſcoveries of thoſe treasures every day. To all Eternity thou art enough to keep alive and in full ſtrength all the love and joys, and praises of Saints and Angels. Lord, thou art enough to answer thine own love, but what am I that I ſhould ſpeak of thee? thou art ſo glorious that I am afraid to ſpeak of thee.

Medi-

Meditat. XXXIV.

Lord I call, and thou dost not answer, I am even tired out if thou dost not support, I sink under the burden, I long and look to see thy beauty, but I cannot behold nor perceive one glympse : that thou art excellent, I see by the eye of faith, but excellencies do not affect me : All my prayers are turned unto this, Lord shew me Christ, and him whom my soul loveth, for I have heard of him, and the same of his excellencies have come unto me, yet mine eyes have not seen him ; I think with my self, Surely Christ manifesting himself, and to be filled with all the fulness of God, and to have a conversation in Heaven, must needs signifie more then ever I have experienced in my self ; For such poor things as I have found wrought in my soul cannot fill up those expressions.

Then

Then I hear of those whose lives are spiritual and Christ-like, not glorious in outward mortifications. Thou art blameless that way speaking of such things which God hath wrought for them and in them, which I have not found, but are the very same things which are in my view, and I follow after to attain but cannot : Then from their relation of the Lords dealings with them, I perceive that God did humble them more before he did discover himself unto them then ever he hath as yet humbled me, so that I find no rest day nor night in my spirit, and yet though I am thus restless in seeking after something which I cannot know what is it I seek for, I cannot discern any true, sincere, constant love to Christ. He neither lets me know that he loves me, nor that I love him, so that I stand amazed, and know not what

what to do, and still by the help of God I will not cease to cry and call upon him for whom my soul I doubt not but would love, if he discover his beauties and love unto me, and work them on my heart: I seek for one, who I cannot tell who he is before I find him, then I shall know, and shall tell to all who he is, and set forth his excellencies, though they shall as little understand me, as I do them, who declare the things that God hath wrought for them.

Medit. XXXV.

There is not such an one in the world as I am that I know; Publicans and harlots, I justify them; I in the midst of ordinances and mercies, in the midst of the flames of love, nay, when thou layest on me that affliction that is now fresh bleeding in mine eyes, or rather

I de-

despised and forgotten, *I* should have learnt obedience by things *I* suffered; and *I* have done as if *I* were to learn to sin by them; Thou hast chastised me with rods, and *I* have put the sting of sin into them, and have made them scorpions; Thou sendest them for Antidotes, and *I* have turned them into poyson; Lord, teach me what it is wherein thou art so offended, to leave me thus: Lord, *I* believe thou hast pardoned me, but small is my comfort, when thou pardonest sin, but subduest it not.

Meditat. XXXVI.

Lord, *I* do so evidently find my self unable to judge of truths, or to resist temptations, that *I* almost, may altogether lye at the mercy of every temptation, and to be carried about with the wind of every vain doctrine, if thou dost not stand by me: what should *I* tell thee the secret puddle of my heart?

I am weary of the stench and filthiness of it ; there is not a prayer but they meet me at it ; and lye as a talent of lead upon me : if my heart were all on fire with thy love, these things could not be : I sometimes have thoughts rising in my heart that are wicked, proud, and foolish thoughts ; I begin to be offended, that I begging for the manifestations of thy love, yet have them not ; but those thoughts no sooner begin to arise, but I consider what am I that thou shouldest give me thy love ! and how can I expect the manifestations of thy love when I will not give thee my love, but let it run^{ne} wast upon the creature ? How many times do I chuse to do anything rather then spend my time in Meditation and Prayer, nay to do nothing and be idle ; for although thou lovest us first, yet thou dost not usually discover thy thoughts of love to a Soul, before she hath made over her love

and her self unto thee; then I think thou canst by the power of thy Spirit bring in my heart, my Soul, and my love, and that usually ere thou dost ravish the soul with the discoveries of thy love : this I know, and let all the world know it, that whatsoever wicked thoughts do arise in my weak heart, which I cannot answer, I know that *all thy wayes are holy, just, and good*; Lord, what shall I give for the sheddings abroad of love in my heart? that which should be given for it, were it at the utmost parts of the world, I could fetch it thence. But Lord, the price of it already paid, 'tis near unto thee, even at thy right hand, *O thou most High*, he hath paid for this Mercy by his blood long ago, and my Prayers thou requirest, not as a price : Lord, fill me with these Spiritual Supplications, that I may give thee no rest, nor take any rest my self, *until I have found him whom my soul loveth*?

vetb ? Come Lord Jesus ; Come quickly.

Meditat. XXXVII.

O Lord, beat me, and drive me with storms and Tempests, I am come unto thee like the Prodigal Son, for all but that which most of all *I* should have, a Spiritual Sorrow, ragged, and tatter'd, and undone ; My Sins and Misery are like his, not my sorrow ; For me to see my self languishing, my Graces daily grow weaker, my love colder, and even almost to be speechless in prayer ; Alas, the Sorrow that *I* have is rather bewailing my Misery then my Sin ; I know not what it is Lord, but thou dost ; Sure *I* am, my condition is sad, and I am sad, and my sadness is all the poor remains of Comfort that *I* have ; and yet I no sooner begin to take any comfort in my grief, but *I* perceive so much hypocrisie in my Grief, that the

poor Spark of Comfort that *I* have is put out; Alas, Tears of Blood were fitter for me then dry eyes; O Lord, must every trifle steal away my heart from thee? Thine Excellencies are too high for me, *Wisdom is too high for Fools*: O that thou wouldest take me out of my own hands, and deliver me from my self; and howsoever my heart is not importunate enough now, *I* shall thank and praise thee to all Eternity, if thou wilt make me thine; Thou hast done as much to draw me with the Cords of love, even to wonder: Lord, do thou snatch me as a Fire-brand out of the fire: if thou shouldst stay till *I* am willing without thy making me so, *I* am lost: For *I* shall never part with these painted Vanities, for all the glory in heaven, except thou givest me the eye of Faith to see it, and a Spiritual palat to relish it.

Meditat. XXXVIII.

O Lord, wilt thou let a poor sinner lie gasping out his last breath at thy feet, and die in thine arms: I have abundance of love for the world, O that thou hadst it all: I am sure I am not, and shall never be at quiet, untill thou hast it; nor would I sleep until I am in thine arms of love; My dearest God, how comes it to pass that my heart cannot give it self to whom it will? Had I a thousand worlds, I would give all for thee, that I might be thine; O my soul, why should we stand consulting and contriving what to do? God is ten thousand times more then all things; Why should we weigh a Talent of Lead and a Feather together to see which is heaviest: O Lord, My soul hath chosen thee long ago, I have abundance of experience of the Truth of those things which I have believed: I

^am thine, and thou art my God ;
Thou hast chosen me, and *I* have
chosen thee ; If I should be so vain
at any time as to leave thee , thou
art the same , and thy choice fails
not ; Thou Lord which mad'st me
chuse thee , whilest *I* had no ex-
perience of thy love , wilt make me
continue my choice. Lord , that
any one should choose hell before
thee ! It makes thee not to be less
glorious ; Lord, must my Blasphemies
praise thee ? *I* find so much
hell in my heart, that it is not trou-
bled in any proportionable Mea-
sure, that there is so much hell in it.
When *I* set apart an hour for Me-
ditation and Prayer , then I kept
my heart somewhat close ; But at
other times, *I* am little careful to
improve what *I* read or hear to en-
flame my heart ; *I* had better not
set an hour apart , and give thee
all the day by thinking alwayes of
thee ; Lord , *I* do now acknow-
ledge,

ledge; for then *I* shall not, but if thou shouldest leave me, *I* should be too much given to blaspheme thee; Nay blessed God, let that never be; Lord it shall never be: When *I* consider the desperate hypocrisie of my heart, *I* may every Morning expect that thou shouldst give me up to a reprobate sense, *to commit sin with greediness*; when *I* think of these things, *I* pour out my soul within me: To think with my self, *I* shall lose my Estate, a little troubles me, to think *I* shall lose such a friend, it affects me more, but to think *I* shall lose my God, and become an Apostate, that's a hell unto me; *I* have begged of thee, as for my life, that thou wouldest not leave me, and now *I* beg, *O forsake me not utterly*; To have such a heart, that will neither inflame my words, nor be inflamed by them, is that which hath not been so; Lord, except thou wilt

follow one, that will not stay when thou callest, and overtake one that runs from thee when thou followest, I am lost: Well, I am sure my froward and careless carriage will justify thy justice if thou condemn me, and magnify thy Mercy, if thou savest me.

Meditat. XXXIX.

Lord, this day is thine own, and by being thine, is the more mine; I must now burn without coals about me; The time hath been, when if I had been cold and dull, the Society, Expressions, and Examples of others in dayes set apart to thee, would have inflamed me; Now the company I have is water and snow; *Wo is me that I am constrained to have my habitation in the Tents of Kedar*, and yet Lord, thou art never wanting; Thou sendest forth thy beams of light and heat; if I bring not Clouds over mine
own

own head, I may have enough light from thee; Lord, when will these dayes of sin be ended, and the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord come? I come into thy presence, but when I am come, I am silent and deaf, neither able to speak to thee, nor hear the sweet whisperings of thy Spirit; O that I had a heart to give my self unto thee, or that thou wouldest take these poor longings of my Soul for a Gift, and thereupon take possession of my Soul; *My dayes of leaping for joy to think of thee are gone, and now my dayes of sorrow to see mine own vileness are come;* My tears are now my Meat and Drink, O that I had more of them, so they were more Spiritual; I am a poor creature, but thou art the rich God. My poor heart, why dost thou not speak? why art thou silent? what saist thou? Is not God a good God? what relish or
sweetness

sweetness is there in these words, if thou dost not set to thy seal, Lord, to thy glory, though not to my comfort be it spoken, Thou hast been a good God to me, but I have no comfort from this truth, if I never relish it ; yet if mine heart will be so wicked and vile , and base , as not to acknowledge it, yet my hand shall write that which shall witness for my God, against my self ; Thou art good, patient , and Merciful unto me , enough to make earth and heayen to wonder at thy goodness, and my vileness : Ah my God, my God, must my words go beyond my thoughts of love to thee ? Lord, thou art enough for heaven, enough for thy self, and art thou not enough for me ? Try O my Soul, try , thou wilt never trust before thou knowest this by experience ; thou knowest abundantly that the creature hath told thee , It is not
in.

in me, this thou knowest by experience, and by faith thou knowest it is in God; Well then, lay all thy weight and strength upon him, and none upon the Creature; Hold upon him with both hands, or else thou wilt attribute the greatest failing unto God; For as he that stands upon never so strong a place, if he lean against a rotten wall he shall fall, and one that is asleep, when he falls, will not know whether fail'd him, and so if we do but lean to our own wisdom, we shall happily think that God fails; Lord, I wait, I long for thine appearance; Thou art enough Lord, I know not what to say, I am undone without thee; Lord, I hear the poor fly, oh how it flies up and down; Now it is warmed and revived with the warmth of the Sun; yesterday it lay still as dead; surely Lord, if thou wilt shine upon my Soul, I should be active and cheerful

ful in thy service : No marvel heaven is so full of thy praises , when thou communicatest thy self so fully to them ; The Crumbs that fall from thy Table are too much for me , these temporal blessings are more then I can challenge , yet Lord, I cannot be content with them, give me thy self, and it sufficeh, for all is nothing and snares without thee.

Meditat. XL.

Alas my God, Pride and Despair divide my life. When I find any thing I do in some manner as I should, I begin to be puffed up, and think, that I do more then some others of Gods people ; and when I look upon my failings , these thoughts begin to arise, It is in vain, I shall never overcome such corruptions , My Sinnes doe me more harm by discouraging me , then in the commission.

Meditat:

Meditat. XLI.

Lord, There is no peace until thou hast all our love, while our heart is divided between the world and thee, we can have no quiet, Natural conscience draws one way, and Natural Corruptions another way: It is our ignorance that makes us think that there is not enough in thee to satisfy all our desires, and supply our wants, which makes us joyn the Creature with thee: When Lord, when shall all my thoughts be of thee? I am weary of being thus divided; Lord, if I can dispose of my self, I give my self wholly to thee; O refuse not that gift which thou hast so often desired, thou hast said, *give me thy heart, Lord, my heart longs whilest thou hast it*: If thou saist that I do not give my self freely and wholly enough, alas, nor never shall until thou take my heart, and discoverest the secrets of thy love unto me; when

when thou dost that I shall run after thee; Lord, here's my poor soul, it lies at thy feet, groveling and gasping for life; the Creature hath left me, and I have left the creature, and would not that it should have any more of my love, but it still woes me, and follows me for my love, unless thou overcomest these strong corruptions, I shall never be at quiet.

Meditat. XLII.

Sometimes my heart begins to be fill'd with joy, so that I am ready to cry out, Thou art mine exceeding joy, and then I consider what I shall do, for I am afraid that my joy is false, When I consider how I came by it; whether my prayers have been more fervent and frequent of late, or my repentance more profound: in the midst of this consideration, I can hardly say but think with my self, VVhy should I delay or refrain my enjoyment of
God?

God? and am ready to say within my self, The false joyes in God are better then the true joyes of the world; these joyes are too sweet to let go; Lord Jesus when thou kissest me with the kisses of thy mouth, *I will kiss the Son lest he be angry*; Lord, thou art too good for me, if I may say so; how could I ever expect that thou shouldest come near me more? the poor love I have, makes me say a thousand worlds, and a thousand heavens for my God; the small beams of the light of thy countenance are so sweet; Lord, if thou wouldest but continue the joyes thou sometimes affordest, I had enough; I need not the comforts of the world to make it up, nor fear the afflictions of the world: though one need continual supplies comforts to support one, yet they could not spend them.

Meditat.

Med tat. XLIII.

I will go to God, saith David, he is mine exceeding joy: a sweet saying! O that there were such a heart in me; yet I have an unenflamed heart, a frozen heart: if I leave all things and my self, I should find thee, but these poor joyes of the world quench the joys of the Spirit, I shut out the glorious beams of thy heat and light, and light up the Candles of the Creatures, which have neither heat nor light in comparison of thine; When I go about to rejoyce in thee, My sins come and tell me that they must be mourned for first: Any thing, Lord, any thing, so that I may do what is pleasing in thy sight; I am willing to stay for my joyes while thou art pleased to give them; Only I beseech and desire these three things of thee.

1. That *I may not want grace, though I want joyes.*

2. That

2. That *I* may not go about to make up the want of thy joyes with carnal joyes: let me not kindle a fire, & walk and rejoyce in the light and sparks of what I have kindled, &c.

3. That though thou hast kindled joy, yet that *I* may have sorrows that are Spiritual: Lord, how abundantly good art thou to them that love thee! I lie under the weight of thy love and thy joy, when *I* come hungry and thirsty to thee, to be satisfied with thy joy to the utmost: *I* lie now as a ship upon the shoar, while the Tide of thy joys come and lift me up, and carry me into the Ocean of thy goodness. When *Mary Magdalen* stood weeping at the Sepulchre, thou didst call her by her name, and she forgot all her sorrows, she left her tears, the Sepulchre, and the Angel, and cried out *Rabboni*. My heart makes me believe that *I* would give the whole world to see
Jes

Jesus Christ, for I think if I could see him I should lie down at his feet, and beg his grace, and he would not deny me; This is part of my weakness and want of faith, for he hears my prayers as fully, and is as willing to grant them now he is in Heaven, as if he were on earth; Lord Jesus, thou that never didst deny any poor soul that came to thee for grace and pardon, thou never sendest them empty away, but grantest their request, Have mercy upon me, O Lord, my need and wants are as many, and as great as many, and as great as any of them all; and if my sense of my misery be not so great, my misery is so much the greater.

Meditat. XLIV.

Lord, I perceive that spiritual sorrows and spiritual joys are wholly thy work, for my sins are as many, as great, and of as deep a dye as any in the world, that is not the sin against

against the holy Ghost, and I am
tully and sensibly convinced of it
that they are so, and yet I am as
senceless as if my condition were
quite hopeless; for were it not so,
could I possibly be so seared as I
am? Thou hast said, *I will take a-*
way the stony heart, Lord, if thou
wilt work, who or what can hin-
der? My corruptions and my sins
have, and do harden my heart by
having and committing them, nor
will they soften it by considering
them; What hinders thee from ta-
king away the infidelity and stoni-
ness of my heart? If that hardness
and infidelity doth, why that is the
thing to be cured: If I were
not sick I need not a Physitian:
Lord, *I say not this to justify my*
self, for it is thou of thy free grace
that must justify me; for *I am lost*:
And so for Joyes and Comforts,
though I read and hear of the
Comforts that thou pourest
out

out on others, I am not moved; nay, those very Stories and sayings which have formerly inflamed me, now are as sparks falling into the Sea, warm not at all: alas, when I shall meet thee at the last day, thy Mercies they shall testify against me, when they shall witness my sleightings of them, my fruitlessness under them, and unthankfulness for them: What can I say, Alas, my poor soul, we are undone; but that day is not come yet, one hour more the Lord it may be will give me, *Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly, Come into my poor soul*, for I am afraid to meet thee at the Tribunal of thy Judgement: If thou wert on the Earth, methinks I could go with confidence to thee that thou wouldest hear me, but now thou art in heaven I cannot; *Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe*: Lord, I have received double for all my sins
in

in respect of any profit or pleasure I have had by them : I have had full measure, prest down, and running over; but alas, my vexation of Spirit is more gall then all the pleasures that I have had, that have been worldly. The loss and want of the discoveries of thy love, cannot be recompensed with all that the world hath; thy loves are better then wine. Indeed in respect of the offence to thee, every prayer deserves hell.

Meditat. XLV.

Lord, I am as afraid of Comforts as of terrours, for when I have comforts I am subject to pride my self in them, and instead of having sweet thoughts of thee, have high thoughts of my self; Afflictions breed sorrow, and comforts pride; Sorrow is better then pride. My preaching is my temptation, and and my accuser; If I preach not the strictest wayes of God, my negligence

ligence condemns me ; and if *I* do, my Sermons condemn me ; For my life is hell, I am afraid of publishing something I have by the help of thy Spirit written, lest my life should do no more harm by scandal, then the writings should do good by directing to holiness, and yet sometimes *I* think that if *I* publish and own such writings, they would be a strong Engagement to live more holily : But *I* have something against that also ; for that Motive would in short time lose its strength ; Such waxen wings would melt, and let me fall to my former wayes, and that holiness which is born up with such carnal motives is a poor thing ; Lord, how am *I* distracted and torn in pieces with these thoughts ; Nay Lord, if thou wilt have me go with these burthens on my soul, do whatever seems good in thine eyes ; If *I* may but drudge in thy house, though *I* lie
among

among the pots, yet to be a Skullion
in thy house is better then to sit
at the Table of Princes; Lord, I
am undone except thou work a mi-
racle of mercy; yet if I am undone, it
may be, before thou givest me over,
and discoverest me to the world,
thou wilt let me do something more
that I may glorifie thee, and edifie
the people, nay, it may be thou
maist suffer me as long as I live to
do much of which thou maist have
glory; Lord, if my heart be not
upright, yet O that my actions and
my Preachings may be such, that
men seeing and hearing them may
be stirred up to glorifie thee, by
doing those things sincerely,
which I it may be do out of hypo-
cristie, I am sure too much hypo-
cristie; Lord, I have begged for
such a heart as may not deceive
me, nor dishonour thee; O my
God, What shall I doe? Nay,
Lord, what wilt thou doe? I

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am undone, unless thou dost work mightily above all that I can speak or think, according to that mighty power wherewith thou didst raise the Lord from the dead : O that I might be so raised that I might return no more to corruption.

Medit. XLVI.

By this *I* know and am sensible, It is not for any man to live by his own strength, by my knowing how impossible it is for a sick Man to recover without thee : If a living man cannot speak, how can a condemned man live without thee? If living bones cannot move, *how can dry bones live?* Lord, thou meetest me not at Duties, thou speakest not to me there ; Thou speakest to me in mercies, and *I* answer not ; in judgements, and *I* carry my self as a sleepy man that is unwilling to be awaked ; What wilt thou do with me Lord, when *I* will neither speak to thee, nor answer thee

thee when thou speakest ! O the weakness of my graces , and the power of thy Mercies ! Those sins I have had a mind to commit , thou hast taken from me the opportunity to commit ; It is a comfort to me that I had not opportunity, but it would be a greater comfort not to have a mind.

An Instance according to the Rules given for Meditating on the Scripture.

A Meditation on these words:

Isa. 66. 2.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word.

LET us seriously consider, O my Soul, That if an Angel, or God himself from Heaven had spoken

ken these words in our hearing, as once Christ did to *Paul*, when he was going to *Damascus*, surely I think they would have very much affected us: Is the Word of God less his Word because it is written? I read that the Apostle, *2 Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19.* speaking of a voice that he himself heard from Heaven, saith, that he *had a more sure word of Prophecy*, that is, as I conceive, that he was no less sure that the words of the Prophets were the very words of God, then those that he heard with his ears; Then let us not be less affected with these words, then if we our selves had heard God himself speak them.

2. Nor let us think that they less concern us, then if we had earnestly begged of God to tell us what he would have us to be & do; and as an answer of our prayers we had heard him speak to us from
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heaven in particular, *To this man will I look that is of a poor and contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word:* For doubtless God hath not caused his VVord to be Written in vain, at a venture, for whomsoever should read it, but knew not who they were should read it, but he knew every particular person, to whose hand his VVord should come, and knew his word should come to my hands; and I should read these wery words, and therefore caused them to be written in particular for my sake, though not exclusively: Christ died for all his people, yet *Paul* saith, *that he loved me, and gave himself for me;* and Christ did think particularly of *Paul*, and so of every one else for whom he died, and gave himself up as a Sacrifice and Ransome, particularly thinking on, and intending every one that should be saved by his Death: If a Minister

should go to one that is given to Swearing, and tell him of the hainousness of that sin, and lay it home to his Conscience in private, it generally doth affect him more then to hear the same sin reprov'd in publick, yet he should as particularly apply it then, though he had not in this respect so much reason to apply it, as I have to apply these words to mine own soul; For the Minister doth not, nor can actually and particularly intend every one that is guilty of the sins he reproveth (for he knows not every particular person that is guilty of the sin he reproveth) as God doth every one that reads his word; Therefore let us take this and apply it to our selves, as if God had sent these words written with his own hand to us in particular: VWhen it is said that the Scripture is written for our Learning, &c. *Rom. 15.4.*

I conceive the meaning is not only by way of sufficiency, but by way of intention, efficacy, & decree, in respect of his people, that is, not only that there is a sufficient matter in Scripture to instruct us, but that God did intend and decree that this place of Scripture should instruct every particular one of his people that is instructed by it.

3. And indeed what is the reason that I now read these words, and do now intend to Meditate on them? Is it not, or certainly it ought to be, that I should try whether I am such, or whether I have such an heart and Spirit as these words signify? and if I am not so much as I ought to be, that I should humble my self, and be as truly sensible, and as much affected, and much more, then I am with those bodily infirmities that lie upon me; and

if so be there were a receipt given me, which I had a long time sought for, and endeavoured to get, being assured that if I had it, it would cure me; Surely I should not only read it, because I might be able to tell others what would cure such a Disease, or to enable my self to discourse of that matter, but I should read it with abundance of joy, and unquestionable resolution to take it: Alas, Lord, why do I not read thy Word so also, where the unquestionable remedies of all spiritual diseases are set down? Surely it is my senselessness of the mischiefs of these Spiritual Distempers that makes me so little affected with grief for them, and with joy that I have found out the remedies for them.

4. Blessed God, it is no more in my power to know thee by the strength of mine own abilities, if thou dost not manifest thy self and thy

thy truths unto me, then it is for me to see the Sun without the Sun; therefore Lord do thou take off the Veil that is upon my heart and understanding, and that which is upon thy Truths. I read in thy Word that my blessed Saviour did *rejoyce in Spirit, and give thee thanks, because thou didst hide thy Truths from those that were wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babies*; O that I were of the number of those Babes to whom thou wouldest reveal thy Truths: Lord, give me a powerful, Experimental knowledge of the Truths that are included in these words.

5. And holy and blessed Father, If thou wilt be pleased to let me know thy mind in thy Word, though thy commands should be never so cross to my corruptions, (my base corruptions, which have hindred me from a world of joyes,

grace, and Communion with thee, which if it had not been for them I might have had long ago, I will do them by the power of thy might; Lord forbid that I should be so wicked as to enquire of thee the Lord, (which I do or should do as often as I read the Scripture) as we read the *Jews* did desire the Prophet *Jeremiah*, to enquire of thee for them, though they were resolved before-hand what to do; Yet they said, they would do whatever thou shouldest command, whether it were good or evil: O that I had at least a heart to resolve to serve thee; If I must want, let me want riches, health, liberty, rather than grace; Rather let me want strength, then want a will to serve thee; I had as good sin unwillingly, as to do what thou commandest unwillingly; Lord, give me truth in the inward parts.


6. Those things that lie plain in these words is, *That those that are of a poor and contrite Spirit, that tremble at the Word of God, are highly esteemed of him*; So that poverty of Spirit, and Contrition of Spirit, and trembling at the Word of God, are the three things that are here so highly commended and prized by God.

7. But now let us seriously consider whether we are thus qualified: Am I poor in Spirit? Those that are so, have low thoughts of themselves, and are not troubled that others have low thoughts of them too; They like reproofs better than praises; They do not murmur under afflictions, but rather wonder they are no more afflicted. Is it thus with us?

8. Lord, If there be any thing of poverty of Spirit in me, if I take reproofs well, or afflictions

in any measure patiently, certain it is, it is not at all from my self: I was born with as proud a heart as any, and certain I am that I did not change mine own heart; Thou takest away the stony heart, we do not give thee it.

9. But alas, Lord, I am far from being poor in spirit in any measure, according to that which thou in thy VVord requirest. My passion, and the boylings of my heart, my loving to be called *Rabbi*, and to be esteemed by others, and many other distempers and corruptions of that nature, which I have daily to struggle withal, evidently prove the pride of my heart; nay, and the afflictions that thou laeyst upon me plainly show what the corruption is that thou intendest especially to cure: By the Medicine oft times one may know what the Disease is; and Lord, it is in vain (if there were no other end in it, then to manifest



manifest my distempers to thee) for me to confess the secret pride of mine heart, the strange windings, turnings, depths, and the strange and new Monsters of pride and hypocrisie, that *I* might daily discover in my self; alas Lord, thou knowest these altogether, and since thou dost so, what cause have *I* to wonder that thou shouldest shine upon such a dunghil as I am! But Lord, thou only canst cure me of this pride and hypocrisie of heart, for my prayers cannot; nay, though I consider and am convinced of the desperate wickedness of mine own heart, the vileness of my nature; the abominations of my life, yet these cannot work without thee, as a plaister though it be never so excellent, laid on the wounds of a dead man, it draws not; it heals not, so are all consideration and convictions to a dead heart.

2 But alas, what is there in me, whereof I should in any measure pride my self? For others to have good thoughts of me is no very strange thing, for so they had of the Scribes and Pharisees; but for one that knows the baseness of his own heart, the carnal grounds, manner, and ends of his actions, and a thousand other distempers and corruptions, for such an one to have high thoughts of himself, is, one would think, impossible. But, as to God nothing is impossible, that argues power; so to such a heart as every one hath by nature nothing is impossible, that argues sin; and we have more cause to wonder that we have not committed the sin against the holy Ghost, then that we have done the evils that we have; For certainly, had God but given us up to the strength of our own corruptions, and to Satans subtlety and malice to

to improve them, we had committed that sin long ago. And alas, what good doth the high esteem of others do us? are we ever a whit the more holy because they think us so? Nay, hath it not proved a means to make us more sinful? God hath abundantly declared his wrath against this sin, by that vengeance which he hath poured out upon Satan for being guilty of it: how many severe threatnings are there in the word of God against pride? and how many precious promises to those that are humble? The Lord beholds the proud afar off; *but to this man will he look, that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word.*

3. What are the things that cause thee to pride thy self? Are they thy gifts either of edification or sanctification? Consider that 1. They are very mean; scarce any of thy calling, hath weaker gifts of edification; and no Saint under
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heaven hath weaker gifts of sanctification. 2. Suppose thy gifts were great, O what an heavy account must there be for mis-spending such Talents? What way canst thou worse mis-spend them then by priding thy self in them? Do men praise thee? Alas thou mayest go to hell with their praises, for so did the Scribes and Pharisees: Do all men speak well of thee? and dost thou pride thy self and rejoyce in that? Fear and tremble at what our Saviour saith, *Wo unto you when all men speak well of you, for so did their Fathers of the false Prophets.* 3. Consider how unkindly thou dealest with God; thou dost as a woman that should deck her self with the-jewels that her husband had given her, but despighting his love, gives away those Jewels to those with whom she played the harlot, the more to entice them; is not this the act of an imperious whorish woman? as
God

God himself doth phrase it, *Ezek.* 16. 30. and do but read that Chapter, and you shall see whether you have not abused all the blessings of God more then they did; They spent them in honour to, and in worshipping of Idols; and can one make a baser Idol in the world to fall down and worship it then ones self?

4. Let us consider what are the remedies of this sin.

1. Consider how much hell there is in thy heart, what a base and vile wretched nature thou hast: Consider what the Scripture speaks of men in their natural condition; and be sure the Scripture which was written by the Spirit of God, doth not use to do as those vain men do, who when they praise or dispraise, care not whether their expressions are true or false, so they be high enough; and they rather strive to speak as much as they can,

as then much as they ought. Surely whatsoever the Scripture hath spoken is made good to the utmost by those that are in hell, and would by every man on earth, did God withdraw his restraining, sanctifying grace, and were those sparkes of hell fire that is in every one by nature blown up to a flame, and heightened by those sufferings that are there inflicted.

2. Consider how little good and how much corruption there is in our best actions, from what carnal grounds, and for what carnal ends we perform our holy duties; surely there is more sin in our best actions then ever yet we have discovered in our greatest abominations: Do but meditate upon those several considerations set down in the meditation of our sins, & it will be a great preservative and remedy against pride. Lastly, Resolve
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with thy self never (unless the glory of God may be thereby advanced) to speak or do any thing that may cause others to have high thoughts of thee, or at least not to that end ; what-ever good duties thou dost, whether of prayer or alms, &c. do them as secretly as may be, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.* Though thou art exceedingly to be humbled for thy sins, because they offend and dishonour God, and scandalize Religion, yet let not this at all trouble thee, that thereby the esteem that men have of thee is much abated: To conclude, pray earnestly as if thou wert to pray for thy life, for it is thy life, that God would humble thee ; desire God to afflict thee, or use any means that he would sanctifie to that end; and when thou hast finisht thy Meditation, consider what
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passage hath most affected thee, and keep it in thy thoughts, that by often thinking of it thou mai'st be humbled, and made to be of a poor and contrite spirit, that God may delight in thee, and that thou mai'st delight in him. Now to the King eternal, the immortal, invincible, and only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Meditat. I.

*Of the end for which we
were Created.*

Preparation.

1. **B**E convinced of and affected with the presence of God.
2. Desire of God to assist thee with his Spirit.

Considerations.

1. Consider, God did not create thee for any need he had of thee (for though thou shouldest do

doe all that he commands thee, thou art an unprofitable servant to him; but thou comest wonderfully short of doing what God commands) but only to declare and exercise his bounty and goodness to thee, in bestowing upon thee his grace in this life, and his glory in the life to come. But as it is in *Deuteronomy* plainly set down, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy strength and all thy mind:* and to this end he hath enriched thee with understanding to know him, Remembrance to be mindful of him, Will to love him, Imagination to represent his benefits to thy thoughts eyes to behold the wonders of his works, and a tongue to praise him, &c. 1. Thou being fully convinced of this, thou wilt plainly see that it evidently follows, which is the next thing to consider) that whatsoever is contrary to this end, that

that hinders thee in or from knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying of God, must be avoided and abhorred as the greatest mischief that can befall thee in the whole world.

2. The second thing that plainly follows from this, is, That thou shouldest be little or nothing troubled for the loss of any thing, which though thou lovest, thou maist notwithstanding serve God; thou mai'st lose thy riches, and yet thou mai'st be holy, therefore thou must not mourn nor grieve for the loss of friends, of health, &c. 3. Nor must thou much desire and endeavour for those things which no way further thee in this great business of knowing, serving, and following God, but they are to be accounted superfluous and frivolous.

2. Consider the folly and madness of those who live no otherwise then as if they had been created for

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no other end then to drink, and eat, and sleep, and dance, and game, or to get riches, or such like fooleries. Certainly if these people were asked whether they did in their consciences think that God created them, that they might spend their lives in dancing, &c. they could not say, yes; None can imagine, that have any understanding, that at the day of judgement God will ask them why they did not dance more, and game more, and gain more riches.

3. Consider seriously with thy self, whether thou livest suitable to the end of thy Creation; think with thy self, that when that time which thou spendest in eating, drinking, sleeping, recreation, visits, vanities, is taken from thy life, what a small pittance is left for God, and for the works of thy particular calling. nay, thy sleeping, eating, drinking, recreation, should

should all be done some way or other to enable and fit thee the better for the service of God ; but alas how seldome is it that thou hast thought of fitting thy self for Gods service by eating, drinking, &c. Nay how many times hast thou made thy self unfit for Gods service by such things ? Now before thou goest any further be fully convinced of these truths ; and if any scruple should remain (which cannot though a man be but truly rational) argue and pray them away ; for though it may be some Objections may be too hard for thy arguments (which notwithstanding seldome comes to pass, since thy consideration must be of truths so plain, evident and obvious, which all grant) yet no scruples will be too hard for thy prayers.

Affections.

Affections.

1. Be ashamed and confounded within thy self, that thou hast lived so contrary to thine own Principles, and that thou hast minded that little or nothing in doing of it as a thing by the bye, which if now thou dost but seriously think of it, thou plainly seest to be the main business of thy life, saying thus, Alas, O my God, what did I think of when I thought not of thee? What was I mindful of when I forgot thee? Alas, O my Soul, how comes it to pass that we thought of these things no sooner? 'Tis a strange thing that our hearts and the world should so far deceive us, that we should prefer every trifling thing before that which concerns us more then ten thousand worlds? we have served the world, which was not made but to serve us,

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1. Abhor thy life past ; Well, I am resolved to leave you, ye vain and sinful pleasures, I will no longer dote upon you, you have but too long bewicht my soul. I might have had a thousand holy thoughts and prayers, and Treasures of Alms laid up for Eternity, which I am sure I should not have repented of when I come to die, and you vanities have took up my time, and stole away my heart and thoughts from these things : Well, I have enough of you, I have done with you, for the rest of my strength and dayes I will give unto my God.

3. Turn thy self to God, and say, Blessed God, wilt thou accept of the service of a poor wretch, that hath spent so much of his time and strength upon base lusts & vanities? Nay, surely Lord, If thou wilt accept of such a wretch as I am, such a heart, such love, such

such service as I have, I will give to thee ; and for the time to come, thou shalt be the very joy of my Soul, and the deliciousness of my thoughts , and dost thou indeed entreat and importune me to be reconciled , how wonderful is thy Mercy , that notwithstanding I provok't thee hitherto daily to thy face, yet that thou shouldest follow after me to embrace me I whereas what could be expected but that thou shouldest pursue me to destroy me ?

Resolutions.

Well, by the blessing of God, I am resolved, that though heretofore I have spent whole dayes in such and such like recreations , which at best are but vanities , for this moneth I will either not use such and such recreations at all, or at least spend no more time any day in them, then I do in Prayer and Meditation, and I hope one day the

Lord will work in me such a heavenly frame of Spirit, that Prayer and Meditation shall be in stead of a thousand recreations; *David* was of that temper; for he saith, that he will go to God his exceeding joy, and that the Law of God was dearer to him then thousands of Gold and Silver, and that his heart was ready to break for the very desires and longings that he had after God; O my Soul, that will be a rare time when it shall be thus with us; Why should *David* love God more then we? He forgave *David* much, but he hath forgiven us more, well O my soul, if thou wilt pray hard, and follow hard after God, thou little knowest what he will doe for thee, and the joyes that he hath laid up for them that love him, even in this world are untpeakable and glorious.

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Conclusion.

1. Pray : Lord , thou knowest the deceitfulness of my heart , the strength of my corruptions , and the multitude of Snares and Temptations which encompass me on every side , especially when I am in worldly employments in company , thou knowest how subject holy flames are to go out, therefore be thou pleased by the holy breathings of thy Spirit to keep these holy fervours of love from being quench't ; 'Tis not the strength of my resolutions , that can enable me to resist temptations ; if I am not kept by the mighty power of thee my God, I am lost.

2. Praise God, blessed be thou, O God , for an heavenly Motion or Desire that hath been wrought in me, thou might'st have suffered me as thou dost thousands (I have provoked thee as much as they)

never to be convinced of, or affected with these Truths, 'tis thy wonderful Mercy that thou didst make me for such a blessed end as the enjoyment of thy self; and much greater Mercy, that thou hast let me know so much, but most of all, that thou hast given me a heart to desire and endeavour after it, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul!*

3. Acknowledge thy failings, alas, Lord, whatsoever is wrought in me that's good, had been far greater, but that I am green wood to the sparks of thy love; Lord, pardon the iniquity of my holy services; My highest and most inflamed thoughts of thee are unworthy of thee: It is well that I have thee to love, whom I need not fear loving too much.

After the Meditation is ended.

1. Think with thy self which of these Truths, or what passage of this Meditation did most warm thy heart

heart and affect thee, and fix it, and treasure it up in thy thoughts, keeping it (as it were a Nosegay in thy hand to smell unto all the day.

2. Set down this that thou hast resolved to spend no more time in such a Recreation, then thou shalt spend in Prayer and Meditation.

3. Go unwillingly from this duty, and do not rush into worldly businesses, but look to thy heart which is a slippery deceitful thing.

Meditat. II.

Of the Mercies of God.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.

2. Pray, beg of God that he would put such considerations and thoughts into thy heart, that thou maist be so convinced of, and affected with his goodness, that

thou maist love, praise, and serve him.

Considerations.

1. Consider how much thou art engaged to God for bodily Mercies, he hath given thee thy senses, sight, hearing, and other parts of thy body; If thou didst want thy sight, what wouldest thou give for it if thou wast Emperour of the world? How many thousand pounds wouldst thou give? A Diamond is not therefore worth no more then 6 d because a poor man can give no more: if thou shouldst reckon up what thy hands, feet, health, liberty were worth, to what a vast Sum would they arise? Thou hast all these things from God, thou hast not them from thy Parents, they know not before thou wert born whether thou shouldest be Male a Female, thou maist say to God, as *David* did, *In thy Book were all my members written.*

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2. Consider what faculties of Soul God hath given thee; What a miserable condition are mad men in, those that are born Natural Fools; Thou art well, and thousands are sick, thou hast plenty when thousands beg their bread.

3. Consider what spirituality of Mercies God hath given thee; how many thousand poor ignorant Heathens are there which never heard of God and of Christ, who were born and bred where the Gospel is not preached, but worship the Devil, but thou dwellest in the Sunshine, and under the droppings of the Gospel, and are not these great Mercies and unvaluable? If thou dost not value them, it argues so much the greater goodness in God to bestow them upon thee; nay, hath not God made thee to know him; he hath not only given thee the light of the Gospel, but eyes to behold it.

4. Consider the greatness of God; why should he look after thee, nay, why doth he not destroy thee? Thou art but a Worm, nay, a Viper: why doth he let thee hang upon his hand of Providence, and not shake thee off into Hell fire? As we walk we do not step out of our way, to avoid crushing a Worm to death: If we see an Adder, or such a venomous Creature, we go out of our way to destroy it; God hath not dealt so with thee, but when thou hast run from God, he hath called after thee, and would not suffer thee to perish though thou wouldest; and when thou hast come against him with thy sins, and thy rebellions, he hath stood with stretched out arms to embrace thee, Are not these Miracles of Mercy, O my Soul? how many mercies dost thou receive from God, even at that very time when thou sinnest against him?

5, Con-

5. Consider the innumerable multitude, the infinite greatness of his Mercies, and the wonderful love wherewithall he bestows them: *How precious are thy thoughts toward me, O God (saith David,) I am sure thou hadst just cause to say also, O my Soul. The Mercies that God hath bestowed are, wonderful, but those that he hath promised, are far greater: What manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God! Now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be; That he should make us his Sons is very much; but that he should not spare his own Son, that he might spare us, is beyond all admiration.*

Affections.

Admire the goodness of God; Lord, *what is man? what is sinful man, that thou shouldest so regard him? What am I that am the worst.*

worst of men? Why art thou so good to me that have been, and am so bad? When I was in my blood to the loathing of my person, thou said'st unto me in my blood, *Live*; nay, not only when I was weltering in my own Blood, but in the Blood of Christ, thou said'st unto me, *Live*; What did I ever do to deserve those Mercies? or what have I, or can I do to requite them? As thy glorious Name, so thy Mercies are extolled above all praises.

2. Admire thine own ingratitude; Have I so requited my God, O my Soul, as to return rebellious for my Mercies! Hath God heaped upon me many glowings coals of love & mercy, and is my heart still frozen? Must God on'y be a looser by his blessings? If man (who is bound to do me good when it lies in his power) bestows a small courtesy on me, how do I thank him.

him whensoever I meet him?
but though God (who is no way
engaged) of his free grace bestows
thoutands of thousands of blessings,
how do I live in the midst of them,
without ever regarding of them?
Nay, my ingratitude is such, that
I make God a looser by his mer-
cies: If thou, Lord, hadst made
me to beg my bread, I should have
been more thankful for one dayes
food then I am now for a years;
Are his Mercies less because they
are continued? Alas, O my Soul,
how foolish are we? We do even
daily provoke God to take away
his blessings, because we will not
prize them while we have them;
and then there is another thing
wherein we do wonderfully ill, if
God doth but lay any affliction
upon us, and take away but one
mercy, in stead of being thank-
ful we have enjoyed it so long,
and that he hath not taken
away

away all, we murmur and repine, and rob him of all the praise that is due for the rest of the Mercies we enjoy. Alas, what doth God require of us for all his Mercies but this, that we should love him with all our Heart, Soul, and strength ?

3. Stir up thy heart to Praise and thanksgiving ; *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name ; Forget not all his Benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies : Not love God, not not praise God, O my Soul ! why what could God require less at thy hands then these ? I have heard of one that being delivered out of a great and long desertion, had much ado to stay within doors and not run into the streets and stay every one*

one she met, that she might tell them what God had done for her soul: How do the Angels love and praise God to all Eternity? and why should the Angels love and praise God more then I? He never forgave them one sin, he hath forgiven me thousands: 'tis true they are in glory, so shall I be too if I be not unthankful for the mercies I have received.

Resolutions.

I am resolv'd for the time to come to sing Psalms the oftner, I have not enough delighted in that duty: 'Tis strange that that which is the happiness of heaven, I should find so little delight in: well, for this next Moneth I will spend one hour a week in meditating upon the Mercies and Love of God; His Mercies are enough, and great enough surely to take up so much time; for in heaven Eternity is little enough to admire them.

Conclusion.

*Instances of
Conclusion.*

1. Pray, desire God that he would by his Spirit blow these Coals of Mercies, that he may enflame thy heart with love and joy, and praise of him; alas otherwise the judgements of God will not affect us, nor the Mercies of God enflame us; 'tis the Spirit that quickneth, else Mercies will not profit.

2. Praise God, Call upon thy Soul again, and again, awaken thy heart, let it not be so drowsie at a work of so great importance.

3. Acknowledge, that were thy heart ought, thy mouth and thy heart would be filled with the praises of God, acknowledge that is no want of matter, and Motives of praise in the Truths which thou hast considered, but thy heart is so dead that nothing almost will work upon it.

After the Meditation is ended
think

think with thy self what Truths did most affect thee, &c.

2. Write down thy resolution, &c.

3. Go unwillingly from this Duty.

Meditat. III.

Of Sin.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.

2. Desire God to assist thee in this Meditation.

Considerations.

1. Consider seriously how much God abhors Sin, and how odious it is to him; this you may see both by what God hath said, and what God hath done to shew the abhorrence of it.

2. Sinners, it is said, that God loatheth them, and they loathe God, Zec. 11: 8. and God by his Prophet

Prophet cryeth out, saying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate ; How often doth God profess his hatred of Sin ? if one should spit in a mans face , or lay Toads or Serpents in his bosome, or whatsoever you could imagine, it could not be so abominable to him, as Sin is to God , he hates it more then we hate hel; how can we know any ones hatred of any thing, but by his expressions and his actions ? suppose you should see one take some curious, costly , or rare Dish of Meat which he loved above any thing in the world, and because there was some small crum of another meat which he had an antipathy against, he should fling all with violence and detestation away, were not this enough to satisfie you that he abhorred that meat, a crum whereof made him abhor that which he so much loved ? Suppose you should see one
take

take a Watch, whose wheels and all the rest were cut out of intire Diamonds, and spying some little small and almost undiscernable Spider in it, should fling it to the ground with so much violence that he should break it all to pieces, it would evidently argue how much he detested a Spider: What excellent Creatures are Angels, and yet because a Sin though but of thought, was found in them, how doth it cast them like lightning into Hell! Suppose further, thou shouldest see the meekest, wisest man, & lovingest Father in the world, taking his Son, and scourging of him with rod after rod, until that he were all of gore blood from head to foot, and though he cried out and begged of his Father to spare, yet he would not spare him, but scourged him to death: Would you not say that the Son had done somewhat that the
Father

Father did wonderfully abhor? Hath not God dealt thus with Christ? Did he not chastise him until he shed blood from the Crown of the head to the sole of the feet? Did not Christ die under his correcting hand; did not Christ cry out again and again, *Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me?* And did he not love Christ more then any Father loved his Son, and all this because Christ was guilty of Sin, though but as a surety; these things are not inventions of wit or rhetorick, but real Truths; If the destroying of *Sodom*, *Gomorrhaz*, *Jerusalem*, Angels and the most part of *Adams* posterity and the whole world, save eight persons; If the Sufferings of Christ be not enough to satisfie thee of Gods hatred of sin, then thou mai'st go on to thy own destruction: but know this, *that it will be bitterness at the last.*

2. Consider what thou dost when thou sinnest, every sinner doth virtually put Heaven and Christ, and God, and his favour and loving-kindness, and all his promises in one scale, and that pleasure, profit, or honour, which sin promiseth, with a wounded conscience, the torments of hell, the wrath of God in the other scale, and doubtless virtually a sinner chooseth sin with all these mischiefs, before the service of God with all his mercies. It is as if a sinner should say, rather then I will not satisfie my base lust; I will part with God, with Christ, with heaven and all; I will suffer his wrath, let God do his worst I will have my will; Every obstinate sinner doth in his heart say thus, and though now thou little imaginest it, yet at the day of judgment this will be made manifest to thee as if it were writ with a beam of the Sun; things that

that now seem less consequent, shall then be made evident : A wicked wretch that sees one of Gods people hungry, naked, imprisoned, and doth not relieve him he little thinks, that is all one, as if he had seen Christ so, and not relieved him ; but at the day of judgment Christ will make it manifest unto him.

3. Consider how often thou hast sinned against God, every unconverted man doth nothing else; his plowing is an abomination, *All his imaginations are only evil and that continually* : Nay, though thou art one of Gods people, yet David cries out, *that his sins are more in number than the hairs on his head*; and dost thou think thy sins are fewer then Davids? how many years hast thou lived? how many dayes, hours, minutes? thy sins are more ; The Hour-Glass that runs hath not so many sands in it as the sins that thou

thou committest in that hour; If thou dost not beleive this, consider, that there is not one of thy thoughts, words, actions, but is polluted with abundance of sins; If thou sayest (*Our Father*) since thou dost not speak it with that reverence, attention, fervency, faith, love, joy, confidence, admiration of his goodness, and many other which we are engaged to have, when we call God by the Name of Father, thou becomest guilty of all the contrary sins, and many more that are not named; in speaking that one word in thy prayer not as thou oughtest. Fear not making thy sins seem greater or more then then they are.

4. Consider further for what trifling vanity, nay for what base things that thou wilt be ashamed to own before men; thou hast lost God, lost thine own soul, if thou returnest not, and hast brought

brought on thy self more miseries than the tongue of man can expresse, or the heart of man concieve : there is nothing thou seest with thy eyes, or hearest with thy eares, or feelest with thy hands, is more certainly true than this. But alas, because thou hast heard it so often, and, God of his infinite goodness and patience hath not made thee yet to feel the stroak of his justice, and the misery due to sin; thou wilt not believe him, though his threatnings be never so clearly set down, and with much earnestness.

5. Consider, against what precious mercies, what sweet love, what blessed experience, holy inspirations, what abundance of means, strong resolutions, precious promises, clear light, &c. thou hast sinned.

Affections.

1. Pray to God to help to a further sense of the sinfulness of sin, Bles.

Blessed God, must all these considerations pass as a Serpent on a stone without making any impression upon my soul? Lord give me an affecting knowledge of the sinfulness of sin, and not have such slight thoughts of sinne as I have had; but grant that I may esteem of Sinne as thou esteemest it.

2. Talk with thine own Soul about this matter. O my Soul, are these considerations true or false? If thou thinkest them false, bring thy objection, shew wherein the errour lies, which thou canst never do; but if they be true (as certainly they are) how comes it to pass that we have made nothing of sin? 'tis vain for us to put off the sence of our sins until it be too late.

3. Be confounded and ashamed in the presence of God; Alas, O Lord my God, as a thief is ashamed
M med

med when he is taken, or as a woman is ashamed when her adulteries are found out by her loving husband; so, & a thousand times more I desire to be confounded and ashamed in thy presence, when I consider, how abominable my life hath been; and how that I have committed my abominations even in thy sight, and provok't thee to thy face; and had not thy patience and mercy been infinite, thou could'st never have stood out against so many provocations: I had been in hell roaring and blaspheming long before this day; and then I had been past prayers, and past mercies, and past pardon. What shall I say unto thee, O thou preserver of men? to excuse my sins I cannot, I have nothing but the multitude of thy tender compassions, and thy free grace in Jesus Christ to flee unto; Lord lay my sins home to me to humble me,

me, and to break my stony heart , but lay them not to my charge to condemn me. If thou had'st not in thy word promised forgiveness to Sinners through Jesus Christ , I could no more hope to obtain pardon, then ever the Devils themselves.

Resolutions.

It is enough, O my soul, and too too much , that we have been undoing our selves, and provoking God thus long ; That we have as it were with all our power pulled down the vengeance of God upon us, and as it were kindling his wrath against us, but he hath not suffered his whole Displeasure to arise, nor suffered us to perish though we would ; blessed be his Name that we have not committed the Sinne against the Holy Ghost ; which we certainly had done, had he given us up to the strength of our own corruptions ,

and to the power and malice of Satan to improve them to our destruction. Is it true indeed that God saith, *Yet return, and I will save thee*; doth he stand with stretched-out arms? doth he indeed stand with stretched-out arms to embrace us? is it possible he should be so gracious to forgive such and so many sins, and of such long continuance? well, blessed be God, we will go unto him, and never offend him more. We will hereafter whensoever we are tempted unto sinne, say, what sinne against such love, such mercy, such experiences? offend that God that hath pardoned us? that hath done such things for us, and is not content with that, but hath promised to doe more? I will not hereafter stand parlying with Temptations; but I will cry out unto God, and say, Lord help me, for I suffer violence, and in particular, I am in
some

some measure sensible that I pray not with that fervency and reverence as I ought to do; for the time to come, I shall (by the blessing of God) mend that : I am too passionate , well , since God hath been so gracious, as to forgive so many, so great , so grievous sins , that mine own heart is not able to understand their vileness or number ; I will not hereafter be troubled when I hear my neighbour , or underling, or when I hear my fellow N. use such or such taunting words against me; I will not be provoked by this or that despight or contemptuous trick , that he or she doth use against me , but rather I will endeavour to say or do such a thing, to gain his good will, and to pacifie his anger conceived against me ; for certainly his injuries are not comparable to my finnes ; and yet God forgives me them : there

is a difference between *I. N.* and me, I am resolved I will go to him, and be reconciled this very day, or if I cannot, I will pray for him, and speak well of him this very day, if I have occasion to speak of him at all : howsoever I will pray for him now.

Conclusion.

1. Pray : desire God that he would increase thy Detestation of sin, and that thou mightest as well hate Sin, as leave Sin, and that he would not let any Spark that hath been kindled by his own Spirit go out in thee : Say unto him ; Lord, I doe not beg Riches, I can go to heaven without them, please thee without them ; but I beg of thee Grace, and strength against corruptions, pardon of sins, if thou deniest me these, I am undone.

2. Praise God : Blessed be thy Name that my heart hath been in any measure affected with the hatred of sin , that I have in any measure known and considered the things that belong to my peace ; thou might'st have suffered me to drop into hell , and never to have thought of it before I had been there, but thou hast not dealt so with me.

3. Acknowledge thine one unworthiness of so great patience as God hath exercised towards thee ; thine inability to think any of those good thoughts that thou hast had, &c. as in the first Meditation.

After all , think what passages most affected thee.

2. Write down thy resolutions, &c.

3. Go unwillingly from the Duty.

Instances of
Meditat. IV.
Of Death.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.

2. Pray for his assistance.

Considerations.

1. Canst thou not remember that thou wert by such an one when he died? didst thou not see how his countenance failed, his eye-strings broke, how he grew weaker and weaker, at last grew speechless; how he throtled in the throat, how his teeth grated, how he sweated and struggled for life, and at last gaspt and died: consider that thus thou must do likewise, how soon the Lord only knows; that thou art well now is nothing; that thou art young and strong now, is nothing; for how many are there that have been strong, and well, and as young as thou, within a very few dayes after have been in their Grave.

That

That thou must die is certain, when, where, how, none knows but he that made thee: only this is true, that generally men die sooner then they expect.

2. Consider that there will be an end of the World as to thee; thou must leave Riches, Friends, Wife, Children, Houses, Lands, and thine one body also. Thy friends may stand weeping by, but they cannot prolong thy life one minute.

3. Consider that when thou comest to die, it will certainly not repent thee that thou hast spent so much time in prayer, so much in meditation, so much in holy duties, it was never known since the world began, that any one did then say, O that I had prayed less; though these holy Duties now seem irksome and troublesome to thee, doubtless then they shall bring more comfort to thee, then all those Riches and Vanities in

which thou hast spent so much time, and took so much delight in. These things are certain and infallible, our understandings cannot (O that our lives did not) deny them.

Consider how that the dearest friends thou hast in the world, will hasten thy filthy carcass out of the doors; they will scarce dare to stay with it alone, but say as *Abraham* did, *Let me bury my dead out of my sight*: and then how seldom will they think or speak of thee; or if they do, what good will it do thee?

5. Consider, alas, poor man, whether will thy soul go then, to hell or to heaven: dost thou know to which? dost thou not think thou shalt go that way which thou hast gone all thy life long? if thou hast walk't in the wayes of hell, how canst thou imagine that at the end of that journey thou shouldst arrive at heaven?

6. Consider, what good will all thy

thy wealth, all thy pleasures, all thy vanities do thee at that day? they will all vanish as doth the morning dew. Alas, who knows not all these things, and yet not one of a thousand consider and lay them to heart; and to know these Truths, & live unsuitably to them, doth but add to our folly & madness: *O that they were wise, saith God, that they would consider their latter end.* These serious considerations of our death, and preparations for it, is one of the chiefest points of wisdom in the world.

7. Consider if thou miscarry in this great work of concernment, viz. thy death, thou art undone for ever. If thou mightest live again, and mend that error which thou committedst in thy dying ill, then there were some hope, but it is appointed for all men once to die, and but once.

Affections.

1. Abhor Sin; It is you, and
you

you only that can make that hour miserable unto me; Alas, O my Soul, though we now have slight thoughts of such and such Sinnes, through the deceitfulness of Satan and our own hearts, yet at that hour if we had a thousand worlds, we would give them all, for that which we have so little regarded while we live, *viz.* that we had kept a strict Communion with God, and watch over our own hearts.

2. Despise the World; O ye vanities and fooleries of the world, why should I spend my time and strength in following after you? what have ye done for me, or what can you do? when I shall stand most in need of comfort, you will not only prove *vanities*, but *vexation of Spirit*; Solomon hath tried you, and he hath from his own experience, and from the teachings of the Spirit, hath told me, that you are but vanity; and all
men

men when they come to die, let their Seal to this Truth: Shall I to mine own destruction yield to your enticements? why should I not have the same opinion of you now, as I certainly shall have when I come to die?

3. Humble thy self before God, and cast thy self into his arms of love; beg wisdom of him; every night I am a day nearer my Grave then in the morning; I am nearer to it; but Lord make me fitter for my Grave, and when that hour shall come, let it not come as a Thief in the night to rob me of my comforts; and rather then that hour should not be an happy hour, let my whole life be nothing but affliction and misery; Alas, Lord, if thou deniest me this Petition, what wilt thou give me? Thou hast said, *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end;* and I said, *Lord, teach me so to number my dayes, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.*

[Reso.]

Resolutions.

O my Soul, since things are thus, let us not resist known Truths: shall we neglect these Truths because they are plain? if they are abstruse, then we doubt them; If they are plain, shall we despise them? Dost thou not know how soon thou shalt die, then what have we to doe that must be done before we die, do it with all thy might, for the night comes, wherein no man works: My children are not yet sufficiently instructed in the wayes of God; I will set apart half an hour in a day to instruct them for this moneth, or give so much to the poor every time I miss: there is such a neighbour or acquaintance who goes on in wicked wayes, and my words have so much power with him, that I am confident if I do earnestly beg of God to bless me in the work, and take him privately, and lay before him his danger,
and

and press him to holiness, he may be wrought upon; I have omitted it hitherto, but I am resolved sometime within a week to take some opportunity to speak seriously and home unto him, or give so much to the poor; and so every week give so much to the poor, until I have spoke with him, &c. And since it so much concerns me to be prepared for Death, I will every day make it one special clause of my prayer, to beg of God that he would fit me for that hour, and I will lay up a Treasury in heaven by giving to the poor, and make my self friends of this unrighteous Mammon; that when I fall, they may receive me into their habitations.

Conclusion.

1. Pray; Beg of God that he would increase in thee strong Spiritual apprehensions of Death, and that the thoughts of Death might
imbitter

imbitter every unlawful pleasure to thee; Say unto God, Lord, how few dayes are between me and eternity, whether of horroure or of glory, I am not yet fully satisfied; It is a sad thing, that a thing of so great concernment I should be uncertain of: O blessed God, let this Meditation so work upon me, that I may not cease to pray unto thee, and to examine my self, and use all holy means for the making of my Calling and Election sure; For very shortly I shall be past praying, past examining; for when thou shalt summon me out of this life, then I must come to judgement; therefore those resolutions that I have made of walking more strictly, give me grace to perform them to the utmost.

2. Praise God, blessed be thy Name, O God: for any inward motions of thy Spirit, that thou hast afforded me, and for any
c.c.

3. Acknowledge

3. Acknowledge thy weakness, &c. blessed God, if my heart were not so base, so hard, so vile, that it alwayes hindereth me either in holy Duties, or from holy Duties; it were not possible but that such serious Truths, such powerful, spiritual, practical truths, should have wrought so mightily upon me, that I should never from this very hour be deceived any more with the vanities of the world, but should have set my self, and made it my business to prepare for that great day, &c.

After all, 1. Think what passages most affected thee.

2. Write down thy resolutions, &c.

3. Go unwillingly from the duty.

Meditat. V.

Of the Day of Judgement.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.

2. Beg

2. Beg of God that he would enable thee seriously to think of, firmly to believe, and strongly to be affected with the Truths concerning the day of Judgement:

Considerations.

1. Consider how Dreadful and Terrible that day will be when the Sea shall roar, when the very powers of heaven shall be shaken, when Christ shall come with thousands of his Angels in flaming fire : When an Angel came down from Heaven to rowl away the stone, the Souldiers that watched there became as dead men; nay, the holiest men that have liv'd, have been exceedingly afraid at things of far less Terrour then those things are which will be at the day of Judgement; For Moses himself did exceedingly fear and tremble, when he heard and saw the terrible signs that were at the giving of the Law: and the blessed Apostle, *Hebr. 12. 21.* became as

a dead man, when he saw Christ, not in a flaming fire, as he shall appear at the day of Judgement, *Rev. 1. 17.*

2. Consider, that at the day of Judgement Sin will appear out of measure sinful, for then it will appear with all its aggravations, for the Majesty, Holiness, and Mercies of God will appear in their perfect glory; Men shall then know what it is to sinne against God; our ignorance of God now makes us senseless of the sinfulness of Sin, but when God shall appear like himself, how shall those sins that men now make light of, make them run mad with despair.

3. Consider, O my Soul, that those excuses that now quiet thee, will not serve at that day, nay, thou wilt be ashamed to own them.

4. Consider how strict an account God will require of thee
at

at that day, if only thy groſſer abominations that are odious in the ſight of all men, ſhould be brought to judgement; but the ſmalleſt ſin that ever thou committeſt, every idle word and every vain thought, the very Grounds, Manner, and Ends of thy moſt holy performances ſhall then appear more dreadfully ſinful, then now the moſt crying ſin that ever thou committeſt doth.

5. Conſider that every one of thy thoughts, words, and actions, whether good or evil, ſhall be brought to judgement, even thy moſt ſecret and unknown Sins to thy ſelf, or others. Conſider O my Soul, what ſhame and confuſion will cover thee at that day; doſt thou not remember what at ſuch and ſuch a time thou didſt in ſecret: Suppose all thoſe Sins that ever thou committeſt in private, ſhould be known to all in *England*, or ſhould be writ on thy

thy forehead, that all that saw thee might read them: wouldest thou not be ashamed to come into any company? but what is this to that which shall be at that day, when all thy secret Sins shall be published before all Men, Angels, and God himself; these are not inventions of men to terrifie thee, but truths of God to reform thee.

6. Consider how fully and clearly thou shalt be convinced that day of thy Sins, those with whom thou hast committed them will witness against thee, thy dearest friends that thou hadst in the world, must and will testifie against thee, nay, Satan, that tempted thee to those sins, and God that forbade thee those Sinnes, nay, mine own conscience (which men will as perfectly remember every Sin, with its aggravating circumstances, as if it were but then committed) will be a swift witness

witness against thee; this will be that worm that dies not; a clamorous and a wounded Conscience are insupportable even in this life; but neither are the clamours so loud, nor the wounds so deep and pestilent as they will be.

7. Consider the dreadful Sentence of Condemnation that God will pass upon the wicked, viz. *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels*; Wicked men know not now what it is to depart from God, but then they shall know; for God, before Men and Angels, in fury poured out, to bid them be gone, and call them cursed wretches, who knows the horreur of it? *If the wrath of a King be as the roaring of a Lion*, what will the wrath of God be? Consider further, that word is *Everlasting Fire and Eternity*; How dreadful art thou further to have such miserable companions as Devils; singing

the Devil should appear to thee when thou art alone, how could'st thou bear it?

8. Consider the sweet Sentence that shall pass from the gracious mouth of Christ to his people, *viz. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world:* and how sweet will those words be, when in the mid'st of all their fears and troubles, the righteous shall hear the Sentence of absolution: What abundance of comfort have the people of God, when God manifesteth and gives them his loves even in this life, and seals them to the day of Redemption, and lets them see their names written in the Book of Life, giving them full assurance that he is theirs, and they are his; but alas, all those joyes may not be compared to these: the testimony of our own conscience, and the witnessing of the Spirit, the manifestations

tions of his love, and the smiles of his countenance are not so clear, so full, so lasting, as they shall then be, no more to be compared to them, then the light of the Sun is to that of a spark of fire: For Christ to call us blessed, is more then for all the world, and for all the angels in heaven to call us so: doubtless it did exceedingly affect *Daniel*, when the Angel told him that *he was greatly beloved*, Dan. 9. 23. If thou had'st a thousand worlds, O my soul, wouldest thou not give all for this, that God would say so to thee; Well, if thou wilt be watchful over thy wayes, live holily, love, and believe in Christ, and repent, the day will shortly come, when Christ shall say that, and much more.

Affections and Resolutions.

1. Tremble, O my soul, when thou thinkest of these things; Why art not thou exceedingly affected with the thought of them? hast thou

thou such a full assurance, or is thy life such, that thou needest not fear; Was not *Moses* and *John* as holy as thou? Was not *John* the beloved Disciple, and *Moses* one with whom God spake face to face, and yet they trembled: O my soul, it is much to be feared, that it is Ignorance and infidelity, not a Gospel-assurance that makes thee so senseless; nay, it is infallibly certain, that whosoever lives wickedly, and trembles not at the thought of judgement, it proceeds from a conscience scared with a hot Iron.

2. Admire and be astonisht at the miserable condition of all those that live without God in the World, such are all they that repent not, and believe not the Gospel.

3. Examine and try thy self, O my soul, Let us judge our selves that we be not judged; We may easily know what Questions shall

be put to us that day, we must be judged by the Word of God, then let us judge our selves by it now ; do we indeed strive to *enter in at the strait gate* ; May that which we do in the service of God be truly called striving or no ? Can a faint prayer be called striving, or no ? when every Temptation at the first assault overcomesthee, and thou fightest not a stroake ; Is this striving ? Is this to fight a good fight ? and resisting unto blood ? Do we think that God at the day of Judgement will avouch this striving ? nay, can your own Conscience think it so now ? *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*

4. Pray, O blessed God, thou that art the great and just Judge of all men, be pleased to fit and prepare me for that, that that day *may not come as a thief in the night*, as to rob me of all my Comforts, deal with me how it seemes good in thy eyes, afflict me, chastise

stife me, only let me be saved in the day of the Lord.

5. O my Soul, Let us truly consider what we are to do, and how we are to live, that when others at that day *shall call to the Hills and to the Mountains to fall upon them, and to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb*; we may lift up our heads, because our Salvation draweth near: Well, O my Soul, I read in the Word of God, that the neglecting to judge our selves, and the judging of others, are two Sins that will cause all those to be judged and condemned that live in them, therefore I am resolved by the gracious assistance of the Spirit of God for the time to come, never to censure or judge any one, as I have done; and frequently to examine my self, and as frequently and severely to judge my self as formerly I have used to Censure and judge others, and to use as much Lenity,

mildness in judging and censuring others, as ever I did in censuring my own wayes, and if I doe speak ill of any one, I will, if I remember it when I am before the Throne of Grace, not only beg pardon of my Sin in rash judging, but as much as in me lies, make him some restitution by putting up as many prayers for him as I have spoke evil things of him; and let us further resolve of my soul, and by thy blessed assistance, O God, I am resolved, and do promise before thee for the time to come, frequently, and I beseech thee that I may alwayes do it before I do or speak any thing, consider whether I dare own that action or that word at the day of Judgement, and if I dare not own it, I will not dare to do or speak it; and when at any time I think of omitting of any Holy Duty, and think that such or such an excuse will serve, I will bring it before

the Judgment Seat of God, by seriously considering with my self whether in my Conscience I think that God will take that for a sufficient excuse at that great day : For the Conclusion of this Exercise I refer you to the Conclusions of the former Meditations , for I am loath this Manual should swell too much.

Meditat. VI.

Of Hell.

BE convinced of , and affected with the presence of God.

Considerations.

I Consider, O my soul the greatness of these Torments ; certainly if God so heavily afflicts his own people as he did *Job*, *Heman* , and divers of his people who have been in disersion many years : How sad are the expressions of *David*, he saith, *he roar'd for the disquietness of his Soul* : And how many sad Expressions had *Job*,

that he had not time to swallow his spittle, and how that he chose rather a strangling then life, and many other exceeding sad expressions, which could never have proceeded from an holy man, who is set before us as a pattern of patience, if his afflictions had not been very great: And Heman said, that the terrours of the Lord were so great, that he was almost distracted with them: and so from his youth up until that time that he writ that Psalm. *Psalm. 88.* *If this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?* And if God chastise his people with such Rods, what Scorpions shall the Damned be Scourged with? and if the righteous have been thus afflicted, tossed with Tempests, and not comforted, where shall the wicked and ungodly appear? what shall the portion of their cup be? even the dregs of the vials of Gods wrath, for upon the wicked he shall rain snares,

suares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest.

2. Consider what the sufferings of Christ were ; if we do truly and seriously consider how much those words signifie , when our Saviour saith, *My soul is heavy to the death* , we shall be helped to understand what our Saviours sorrows were. If the wisest , holiest and patientest man in the World, who was not oppress'd or distemper'd at all by reason of any bodily distemper of Melancholly , I say, if such a man should come to an intimate bosome friend , and with a sad countenance should tell him that he was even ready to die because of the abundance of grief and sadness that lay upon his Spirit, would not this argue that his sorrows were exceeding great ? especially when his friend never heard him to complain in all his life, though the injuries and sufferings had been very great all

along : If he should further say unto his friend , I beseech you to watch with me ; surely it would argue an heart overwhelmed with grief: Now I say, for a Saviour to say so to his Disciple, and afterward to sweat blood ; O what unknown sorrows did our Saviour feel ! How then is it possible for the wicked to escape , when God spared not his own Son though he was but a surety ; and those sorrows that made him groan , will crush thee to pieces ; Woe be to that man that is to satisfy the Justice of God in his own person.

3. Consider, O my Soul, the sad aggravating concomitants of these Torments ; every Member and faculty both of Body and soul shall be tormented : here if our head akes, may be our heart doth not ake ; if we have the Stone, we have not the Gout , or if both them, yet not some other Torturing disease ; or if the whole body
be

be tortured, yet one may possess his Soul in patience; but to have a tortured body, *and a wounded conscience, who can bear it; besides all this, none can help, none will pity those that are in hell; nay, what is the height of misery, that way God himself shall in the mid'st of all their roarings and tortures, laugh at their calamity when it comes, as desolaion, and as a whirlwind upon them.*

4 Consider seriously! what Eternity means; for ever, ever, ever, to be tormented, is an overwhelming consideration: To lie under the torture of the Stone but one night, how tedious is it; but to be tormented to all eternity, O it is the Hell of Hells.

Affections and Resolutions.

Be astonished, and tremble at the wrath of the Lord: Alas, O my Soul, why dost thou not tremble as *Felix* did, when thou considerest these things, why art not thou

more sensible of the power of his wrath? *do not the Foundations of the Earth tremble, and the pillars of Heaven shake when he is angry;* and how comes it to pass, that thou art so little affected with these things? hast thou full assurance of the favour of God? when was it sealed? sureley the very possibility that these things should come upon us, should very much affect us.

2. Pray: O blessed God, thou that hast the keyes of Death, and of Hell, take pity of me; and though I neither understand, nor am sensible in any considerable measure, either of the the Misery of Hell, or of my own danger in falling into them; Lord, how thou knowest both, let the bowels of thy compassion earn towards me, and never suffer me to fall into that devouring fire, and into those everlasting burnings: blessed be thy Name that I am on this side of Hell,

Hell, if thou hadst cast me into that place of Torment, as I have daily provoked thee to do, I had been past hopes, past prayers, past mercies, past repentance; I beseech thee, O Lord, that thou wilt chasten me, that I may not be condemned with the world.

3. Despise and abhor the sinful vanities and pleasures of the world: O vain world, there is nothing in thee but sin and misery, temptations, vanity and vexation of Spirit, and are thy vain profits and pleasures so much to be valued, as for them to dwell in devouring fire? and are the pleasures of Sin that are but for a season, so much worth, that for them we should dwell in everlasting burnings? have we not had frequent experiences, that the sorrows we have had for committing of Sin, have far exceeded the pleasures that we have had in committing of it, and surely the

terrors of an awakened conscience, are not to be compared with the horrors of the damned, and other insupportable and endless miseries of that place of torment.

Come, O my Soul, let us not deceive and flatter our selves with vain and false hopes of the mercies of God : It is true, God is very merciful to them that fear him, and we may be sure of this, that if we do sincerely desire and endeavour to serve him, that we shall find his mercies as much above our thoughts and expectations of them, as the heavens are above the earth; but if we slight them, and are careless of his service, and turn his grace into wantonness, let us not deceive our selves with vain words, *for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience* : and those that live so, shall surely find, that at that day the mercies of God will not serve at all to mitigate, but

but abundantly to Justifie the wrath and fury of God, that he shall pour out upon the wicked: then they shall pay for every Mercy they have received, and the riches of his despised goodness shall but increase the Treasures of his wrath: therefore, O my Soul, since these things are so, what are we to do? why do we not fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell? The Prophet *Habaccuc*, when he did but think but of some temporal Judgements that God had threatned, *rottenness* entred into his bones. If indeed the love of God did constrain us, so that we did from a principle of love make conscience of Sin, so that we never offend God, it were well; but since we plainly find that it is not strong enough alone, let us not fear to call in and improve the consideration of the Torments of Hell to deter us from Sin; the Motive is imperfect, but not Sinful; our

our great work we have to do in the world, next to the glory of God, is to avoid hell, and obtain heaven, and to resist our now three great enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, who endeavour day and night, to drive us headlong into Perdition. If any one in the World, much more if the Devil should appear to us, and offer us such a sum of money if we would give him our Souls that we might be dam'd, we think we should abhor him and his offer; but alas, doth not every one that useth by extortion and violence either getteth or keepeth what is not his, do the same thing? his damnation is as certain and as infallible, though more secretly and invisibly contrived by Satan, as if Satan should visibly appear to him and he make a contract with him: therefore, O my Soul, let us take heed of the wiles of Satan, for he generally works by the
World

world, and the flesh to deceive us, therefore let us now resolve by the blessing of God to look upon the world and the flesh, to be as dangerous and implacable enemies as Satan himself, let us not endeavour to please the World by vain Discourses, by omitting what God commands, or doing what he forbids: Let us not be troubled, but rather rejoyce; *when we are reviled and scorned for righteousness sake*; For the time to come, when I am to do any Religious Duty, I will not so much as consider what men will judge or say of me, nor endeavour to make the world my Friend, since God himself hath set enmity between us; and as for the flesh, I am sure we are no debtors unto that, we have paid it far more then ever we owed it, therefore for the time to come, I will rather abstain from lawful, then use unlawful pleasures, and I will take heed not only of those pleasures

pleasures that are unlawful in kind, but those also that are unlawful in degree : and that I may better avoid unlawful pleasures, I will sometimes abstain from those that are lawful ; and having seriously considered , I am convinc'd of this, that I have not made conscience enough in the matter of sleep, I have not redeemed the time from that, nor have enough considered the Sinfulness of it, but like the Sluggard that *Solomon* speaks of, *have turned upon my bed as a door upon the hinges*, therefore henceforth I shall endeavour to get as much time from sleep, as the health and strength of my body will permit : and because I am confident that if the damned were in their natures changed, and were to live again on earth, they would think it a blessed change, to change their howlings into singing of Psalms, and their roarings into Prayers, nay if they were to live

Metuselahs

Methuselahs age upon the rack :
Therefore whensoever I am at any
time tempted to be weary of this
labour of love that is to be un-
dertaken in the hardest duties of
Religion, I will endeavour to shame
my self out of that temptation, by
thinking thus with my self, that
Hell is so much worse then we can
suffer in this world, either in
Gods service, or for Gods service;
that it were not only a desperate
wickedness but madness, for the
avoiding of the one, to fall into the
other. For the conclusion of this
Meditation, observe the Directions
and Instances of former Meditati-
ons.

Meditat. VI.

Of Heaven.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected
with the presence of God.
2. Pray to God to assist and en-
able thee in the work.

Consi:

Considerations.

1. Consider, O my soul the wonderful greatness and incomprehensibleness of those joyes. For,

1. Consider what great things God hath given to wicked men in this world, what vast dominions, power, wisdom, learning, Majesty, and indeed as to the things of the world, as much as their hearts can desire; if God gives such things to Dogs and Swine, what may we think are the dainties of that banquet which God feasts his children withal.

2. Behold the Earth and the Heavens in the height of the beauty of the Spring, and in the strength of the glory of the Sun, how delightful a sight is it to behold the works of Gods Creation here below, the commonness of this sight much abates the delight and wonder of it; but doubtless if a man that were born blind should when he had attained to the full

full perfection of his age and understanding, be placed in a Paradise as *Adam* was, and should see as soon as his eyes were opened, the earth adorned with all manner of curious Flowers and Trees laden with all manner of Fruits, and Sun shining in its full strength, how wonderfully delightful would such a sight be? and if the foot stool of God be so rich, how glorious is his throne.

3. Consider the wonderful manifestations and joyes that God hath bestowed upon his people in this life, they are unspeakable and glorious: Some have cried out, Lord, either with-hold thy comforts, or enlarge the Vessel, for I am not able to bear my joys. We read of *Daniel*, that the Manifestations that God gave him, drunk up his Spirit, and made him sick some dayes after, Dan. 8. 27. Such joyes have been so great, that they have sweetned the bitterest

terest persecutions ; they have made them clap their hands for joy in the mid'st of flames, and cry out in the ravishment of their spirits, *O ye Papists ; you talk of miracles, but here is a miracle, I am in the midst of these flames, as in a bed of Roses.* But alas, what are the joyes that God communicates to his people in this life, they are but as the drop of the bucket to the whole Ocean : the Apostle tells us, *that it doth not appear what we shall be.* We would give if we had it a thousand worlds, one would give all to enjoy these spiritual sanctifying ravishments of spirit one day ; If these then are so sweet, what are those things that thou hast laid up for them that love thee !

4. Consider that God hath prepared these joyes, on purpose to glorifie his goodness, and power, and wisdom, in preparing joyes for his people worthy
of

of his magnificence and love ; he doth it for that end , that he may be glorified and admired in all his Saints ; and what cannot infinite power and wisdom, and what will not infinite Love and Goodness do, when they set themselves to prepare an entertainment , and to bestow a reward that may set forth their greatness ? what do Kings do in such cases ? that which is accounted a Feast amongst poor people, is a rich mans fast. If the strength of this consideration were drawn forth, it would wonderfully affect us.

2. Consider wherein these joys consist for the negative part of them : There will be no sickness, no pain, no death, no temporal misery or imperfection ; nay, there shall be no Sin , no Temptations nor corruptions, no Desertions, no imperfections of Graces, or Duties, or Comforts What would a poor
delivered from this
body

body of Sin and Death, there we shall see God clearly, fully, everlastingly; there our enjoyments shall be incomprehensible, our union wonderful and inseparable, and all shall be eternal. What a world of difference is there betwixt a dead Carcass, and the same body when he liv'd? when it is dead, it is senseless, gaitly, filthy: how beautiful, how active, how many rare endowments had it when it liv'd? and all these proceeded from the union of the soul with it; and if the soul which is but a poor creature by its union, doth communicate such rare things to the body, what do we imagin will be communicated both to the body and the soul, when God shall be more neerly united to them, then they are one to another; when they shall be made more capable of receiving, and God will be more abundant in communicating:

Affection

Affections and Resolutions.

1. Admire the love and goodness of God; O blessed God, from the beginning of the World, men have not perceived by the hearing of the ear, nor have they seen with their eyes, nor have any understood, save only thou, O God, what thou hast prepared for them that love thee; how hast thou commended thy love to us, that we are thy Sons, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; *O the length, and breadth, and bright, and depth of thy love that cannot be known;* Lord, what are our duties, or what are our persons, that thou shouldest so highly reward them and us; our best righteousness is as filthy rags, and for us we are worms, nay, a generation of Vipers; Is it not enough that thou dost not shake us off from thine hand of providence into Hell fire, but that thou shouldest lay such Vipers in thy bosome, and
warm

warm us with thy love ; Is it not enough for thee to forgive us our rebellions, but that thou shouldest give us such blessings : were it not a miracle of bounty and goodness , for thee to bid us seriously to consult and think what to ask of thee, and thou wouldest give it us, though it were to the half of thy Kingdom, but that thou shouldest set thy wisdom on work in preparing, and thy liberality in bestowing such incomprehensible rewards that we could neither ask nor think, but as far as the heaven is above the earth, so are thy thoughts of love above our thoughts ; For thee to give thy Kingdom, thy Christ, thy self, these are acts of goodness, that are infinitely above us, yet worthy of thee , that delightest to magnify thy goodness, that rejoycest over thy people , as the Bridegroom rejoyceth over his Bride.

Despise

Despise the World, What are the things of this World, O my Soul, what is there here to be desired but Sin and Misery, Snares and Temptations, *Vanity of vanities, and vexation of Spirit*; one hours communion with God, and the joyes of the holy Ghost, that he hath given to his people in this world, are worth more then the world can know of; Why do we spend our strength and money for that which is not bread, and our labours for that which doth not satisfie: O vain world, God hath outbidden thee, thou offerest trifles, he offers me Heaven for my love and service, though my love be unworthy, too little for him, yet it is too much, too good for thee.

3. Long for, and breathe after Heaven; *As the Hart panteth after the Water-boooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God; My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living*

O

God,

God, when shall I come and appear before God? when shall I be delivered from my absence from thee, and from mine ignorance of thee; Make hast, O my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices: The Spirit saith Come, and the Bride saith Come, and the Bridegroom saith, Surely I Come quickly, even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

4. Encourage, and stir up thy self to the love and service of God; Come O my Soul, Let us be steadfast and unmovable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord; Let us not be weary of well doing, nor of the labour of love, for we shall reap if we faint not? We have known, and in some measure endeavoured to serve God thus many years, were it
not

not a sad thing for the want of continuing one year, one month, it may be but one week, or one day more, I should lose all my hopes and expectations of glory: God forbid; O my Soul, Let us encourage our selves in the Lord, we are not kept by our own, but by the mighty power of God through Faith to Salvation, and be thou assured of this, that the first minute thou art in Heaven, thou shalt have such full measure, pre'st down, heapt up, and running over, that thou shalt break forth in the Songs of joy and praise to all Eternity, maynifying, admiring and adoring God, that ever he gave thee leave, and grace to serve him, then shalt thou see, and so thy experience shall make thee confess with joy and wonder, that the light afflictions and labours of love that thou endurest in this life, are not worthy to be compared to

the joyes that shall be revealed in thee, ; VWhen at any time thou beginnest to be weary, look to the price of thine high calling, and when thou comest to heaven, thou shalt admire, when thou seest how abundantly thou art over recompensed, and thou wilt have just cause to say, Lord, what is this that thou hast done for me, alas, what were the things that I either did, or suffered in thy service, what were my filthy rags that thou shouldest give me such a Robe and Crown of Glory; O my Soul, what if we do weep, now the time is at hand when God will wipe all tears from our eyes.

O my son, these things cannot be believed and slighted, and understood and neglected; If thou dost not believe them, what is the reason? Are they too glorious things for God to bestow upon such wretched sinners? why dost thou

thou set bounds to the goodness of God, and say, Hitherto thou shalt go, and no further, nay, doubtless since God hath said, that he will do that which shall glorifie his goodness to his people, the incredibility of it makes it more credible, but if thou art convinced of the truth, why art thou not affected with the Excellencies of these Joyes? dost thou not relish them? well, For the time to come I will meditate more of these things, I will by giving to the poor, lay up my Treasures in Heaven, I will part with such and such vain delights for it, I will spend more time and communion with God in praising, admiring and adoring of him, that if it be possible, by frequent performing of these Duties, I may at last taste and relish the incomprehensible sweetness of them, that I may be enamoured more of heaven, and

because all my endeavours are in vain, if the Lord reveals not these things unto me, therefore I will beg of God that he will discover the riches of his goodness to me, I have not been careful enough, nor sensible enough of Sins of Omission, when I have had no just thing to take up my thoughts, yet I have not thought of thee; henceforth when my heart is affected with thy Excellencies, thy love, thy mercies, I will praise thee, when it is not, I will pray to thee that it may, and for my Master-sin, mine iniquity, I will be most frequent in those duties that are most contrary to it; I will especially in my reading of Scripture, take notice of, and write down those places, and those examples that are most proper for the cure; I will speak against my iniquity, that if it may be I may thereby the more engage my self to leave it.

Meditat.

Meditat. VII.

Of the Excellencies of Christ.

1. **B**E convinced of, and affected with the presence of God.
2. Desire of him who only can to manifest the Excellency of Christ unto thee.

Considerations.

1. Consider, that if the holiest man that ever lived, lived near thee, what high expectations wouldest thou have of his carriage and conference, when thou sawest his zeal and patience, &c. But no man lived ever without Sinne; Therefore suppose an Angel should take upon him humane Nature, and live amongst us, with what enflamed expressions and affections would he speak of God, of Heaven, and every thing that is Spiritual; But alas, his carriage, his holiness, his wisdom, where as

nothing in comparison of Christs ; For there was not any word, or action that eyer Christ spoke , or did, that if all the Angels of heaven had studied and set down how it ought to have been done , or they themselves should have been to have done it , they could not have equalled it , nay , even God the Father had he taken our Nature, he would not have spoke or done any word or thing which should have had (in respect of it self, or any circumstance) more holiness or wisdom then Christs words and actions had, so that certainly in this respect , he that saw Christ, saw the Father, as he himself saith.

2. Consider the wonderful wisdom of Christ , Certainly he was greater then *Solomon* ; For though he was the humblest man that ever lived, yet he himself said so , nor did it any more argue pride in Christ

Christ to say that he was wiser than *Solomon*, then it would have argued in *Solomon* that he knew more then a New-born Babe. VWhen his most malicious and cunning Adversaries came to ensnare him in his words, so that they thought it were impossible for him to say, I or No to their Questions, without extraordinary prejudice to himself, yet he Answered with such admirable wisdom and innocence, that they went away ashamed of their Folly, Nay, when Satan himself came and set upon him with his subtlest Temptations that he could possibly find out, yet our Saviour without Deliberation and Study, immediately answered him so fully, that he could not so much as reply, but was fain to fly to another Temptation; and no marvel, for he was the Wisdom of the Father.

3. Consider the wonderful and exceeding holiness of Christ, when he was in the height of all his Agonies and Sufferings, he abated not any thing of his Love and confidence in God; For his Sufferings did not make him forget, or diminish any thing, no, not in the least circumstance of his Graces, or of any thing that the Law required at his hands: To be so freely willing to have that Agony continue, which was unspeakable and as the Torments of hell (if his Father pleased) was more then if those in hell should freely submit to endure the Torments they suffer. The holiness of those in heaven is not comparably so much greater then the weakest Saint on earth: As the holiness of Christ was greater whilest he lived on earth, then that of those in heaven; Nay, all the Saints on Earth are fil'd from his fulness; For he
is

is the Fountain that conveys to his Saints, as they are able to receive the infinite Ocean of the holiness of the God-head; No marvel that the Angels when they saw his glory, cryed out, *Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbaths.*

4. Consider, that notwithstanding all these infinite Excellencies in Christ, *he thought it no robbery to be equal to the Father*; yet how exceedingly did he humble himself, and how gracious was he: The poorest man or woman in the Word, nay, the greatest Sinner that truly repented, with what love did he receive them: He was the Son of Righteousness, from whom the Angels receive their Glory, and yet he disdains not to shine upon such Dunghills as we are: It is strange, O my soul, to consider how willing Christ was to please every one; only provided it was in things that were not for their hurt that de-

fired them; Many times, nay, most times, when others were with him, when he in respect of himself, only would have done otherwise, yet he did as their desires required, *Rom. 15. 3.* The Apostle saith, even Christ pleased not himself, many times when he was hungry; If any came to him that needed Instruction, or if he were sleepy, and any came to him that needed Consolation, he would abstain from Meat and Sleep that he might do them good; it is not so with great men, but it was so with Christ, who was the great God.

Affections and Resolutions.

1. Admire the Excellencies of Christ; O blessed Saviour, Thou art the chiefest of ten thousand; Thou art altogether lovely, Thou hast a Name above all Names, That at thy Name every knee should bow;

bow ; Thou Lord, art set at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly places ; Far above all Principality. & Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named , not only in this World, but also in that which is to come ; Thou art the brightness of thy Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person ; Consider, O my Soul, what can these words mean ; Surely if God commanded all the Angel to worship him, when he brought him into the VWorld , how much more should we for whom he hath done, much more admire and adore him in Spirit and in Truth.

Be confounded and ashamed , that thou art no more affected with these things : Doubtless, O my Soul , It is not for want of excellency in Christ, for he is the Lord of Glory , but for want of a clearer Faith in thee to behold his

his Excellencies ; If the Scripture had not spoke the thousandth part of Christ as it doth, how could thy thoughts have been lower of him then they are ; how could thy heart be more senceless : It is a shame that every vanity should steal away our hearts from Christ, much more abominable is it that our very sins that murdered him, should ever prevail with us in the least.

Pray, Blessed God, 'tis not in man by all his wisdom and industry, to know, or be affected with the Excellencies of Christ, if thou dost not reveal them ; If I had a thousand worlds, they were too small a price for so great a Mercy ; O shew me thy self, and thy Son, and it sufficeth ; And now, O my Soul, are the Excellencies of Christ nothing unto us ? Do we indeed admire them ? Surely all is but meer words, and vain thoughts, if we
do

do not strive as far as we may to imitate him in those Excellencies, for which we pretend to admire him; Are we as patient as he was, Meek, Humble, Holy, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, &c. We do but deceive our own souls in giving Glorious Titles, and speaking high things of Christ, and in the mean while not endeavour to transform into his Image; It is impossible we should love him for his patience and holiness, and not love patience and holiness, nor yet never care to practise and get them; Therefore for the time to come, the Life of Christ shall be the Example whereby I shall endeavour to frame mine: And that I may the better do so, I will read over especially the New Testament, and observe in every particular what Christ did, how he spoke to his friends, to his enemies, how he demeaned

demeaned himself in every action, whether civil or natural, or Religious, how in all his Relations: And when I have written them down, I shall often peruse them, and shall endeavour in every action that I do, and word that I speak, to remember if I can, whether there be any parallel instance in the life of Christ, if there be, I shall make that my pattern, and do likewise, but if there be none, that I can think of, then I would do that which in my conscience I think Christ would have done in like case.

For the Conclusion, I refer you to the Directions and Instances of former Meditations.



The Conclusion of the whole.

I Found a great deal of difficulty
in Writing this small Treatise
of Meditation, not into the Do-
ctrinal or Directory Part, hecause
Christian experience and study are
things by which that party is ma-
naged, but in the setting down of
instances and examples therein I
found the difficulty to lie: For
*Meditation is an harder work then
to give directions thereunto*: and
I have generally found it easier to
study a day, then to Meditate an
hour; but of all the kinds of
Meditation whereof Instances are
set down in this Book, I found the
greatest difficulty in thole of So-
lemn Meditations, they consisting
for

for the most part of Prayer, which the devout Soul when it hath ended forgets, so that if one might gain a world, when the heart is overwhelmed with Grief, or inflamed with Love, or ravished with Joy, one could not remember the pourgings out of the Soul: In such cases, one may say of such Meditations, as Saint *Paul* speaks of those Glorious things which he saw when he was wrapt into the third Heavens: they are neither lawful, nor possible to be uttered, many times the secrets in our communion with God, are of that nature, that it is not lawful by reason of that scandal, nor possible to utter, because the affections being so intensely employ'd Invention, Memory, and intellectual actings of the Soul, during that time do almost quite cease, and indeed whosoever goes about to invent Instances of Meditation, if

if it be only a Learned Man , and not holy, his Studies may exceed his Actings that way , but if it be an holy experienced Christian, as his inward thoughts of Love, Joy , Grief, and admirings of God are above all that his Tongue doth or can utter , so those secret expressions which he useth between God and his own Soul , when his thoughts are full of heaven , and of God , are much beyond what he can invent , or by study expresseth ; Therefore since those Meditations that are fullest of Devotion cannot be remembred, to set down Instances of Meditations , except one should take them from some Saint as he was powring out his soul before God in secret ; one can never set them fully down in secret I say ; For the Soul is never so free, nor may be before others, as with God alone , and the truth is, if I had not had these Instances
of

of *Solemn Meditation* by me, I think I should hardly have set down any of that kind; I should only have referred him to the Psalms, It was so that I wrote these from the mouth of one to whom these unseen, I was oft-times so near that I could hear his secretest Devotions, if uttered though but with an ordinary voice; I am very confident for his part, he thought that none but God and his own Soul were privy to his Prayers, I have sometimes considered it as a case of Conscience, whether it was lawful by stealth to hear, and afterwards to publish the private Meditations of others, but considering how much advantage it may bring to others, and how the party himself can suffer nothing in it, his Name being concealed by me, I resolve to publish them, besides. I very well know (as I said before)

fore) that the Spiritual expressions between God and ones own Soul in secret, are forgotten almost as soon as ended ; It is very unlikely that any should remember then ten years after, as the most of these are : I thought good to give an account of this matter, lest I should be thought to have that holy frame of heart, which many of the expressions in these Meditations argues, that he had that used them, and arrogate to my self that which is farre from me.

If any shall be offended at the brevity and shortnesse of my Directions of this great and weighty businesse of Meditation, I shall onely say thus much as to that.

1. That I am not willing to overcharge or affright New Beginners

ginners (for, for such I do very much intend this Treatise) with too great a Number of Particulars.

2. I would not have this swell above the bigness of a Manual , for I have often observed , that when one hath perswaded some to buy some Book, and told them it hath been but a small price, it hath been almost as strong a Motive (the smallness of the price) as the goodness of the Book : , and I would not be willing that both these Motives should be wanting to the buying of this Book.

As for the plainness of the Style or Matter, I shall thus excuse it, if it ought to be excused, I wrote this for the meanest and ignorantest sort of Christians that they might buy, and understand it, that they might buy it, I have made

made it a Manaul, that they might
understand it, I have made it
plain, and spoke to them in their
own Language; and to the Learn-
ed I say, if any such shall read
this Treatise, *Indoeti rapiunt cæ-*
lum, and though I highly prize
Learning, yet I know that as to
Prayer and Meditation, and all
other acts of Devotion, wherein
we keep a strict Communion with
God, and watch over our own
Souls, and experimental knowledge
and acquaintance with, and in-
flamed affections towards God,
will more avail us then all the
Learning in the VWorld, and
doubtless it is not generally Igno-
rance in those that live under
Ordinances, but the *Non-improve-*
ment of the Truths we know, that
will undo us, if we do but im-
prove these plain Truths, *viz* that
God is, that there will be a Day
of Judgement, that we must die,
that

that we ought to love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind, with all our Strength, that we should do as we would be done to I say, if we did but improve these into practice, we should attain to more holiness, then if we knew a thousand times more, and lest those Truths (as generally men do) by them, as things forgotten, I doe very much think that the Truths of Religion have been spun into, too fine a Thred of late dayes, and some have observed, that fewer have been converted of late years then formerly, when fundamentals have been Plainly, Powerfully, and Practically prest upon the Conscience, it is an Error to think that Notions, so they be Spiritual, cannot be too accurate or Speculative; I have one thing to entreat of the Christian Reader, and it was one end of publing-
ing

ing this Treatise that I might with
it publish these my desires. The
thing that I am to request of you ,
will neither be charge nor trouble;
It is your frequent, serious, ser-
vent Prayers that I desire of you ;
I know it is used too much as a
Complement among Christians, to
desire prayers of their Christian
friends , and they are too often
Superficially promised , and too
seldom conscientiously performed :
Nor would I have thee, whosoever
thou art that fearest God, account
this my Request a thing of
course, and that it is at thy Liber-
ty to grant it or no ; for suppose
a poor Distressed Man overwhel-
med, & almost swallowed up with
the sense of his Miseries and wants,
should with Tears and strong im-
portunities beg relief of thee ;
Dost thou think it were an Arbi-
trary thing (when it was in thy
power) to relieve him or not ?

P

Mightest

Mightest thou not justly expect that the next time thou wentest to pour out thy Soul before God ; that he should keep by him the denial that thou gavest that poor man , and give it thee , when thou in the distressed thoughts of thy heart , makest thy prayer to him ? and dost thou think that the Lord will hold thee guiltless , when one whose afflictions are many , Corruptions strong , Temptations to undergo , shall in the anguish and bitterness of his Spirit desire thy prayers , and thou refuse , or neglect : Consider whether at the day of Judgment thou wilt have any sufficient excuse to plead. I have sometimes thought that the Bills that have publickly been put up for the prayers of the Congregation have been too little regarded , it may be they have been too customarily and formally put up , it may be so , but it is not good for

us

us to be Judges of evil thoughts, little do we know what Terrours and Fears, and Anguishes of Spirit overwhelm them, while they are so little regarded by us; O that we were sensible of others afflictions and sorrows, whether spiritual or Temporal, as they themselves are, and as we would have them to be of ours, were our Souls in their Souls stead: And if the Lord should so by his providence order it as to bring us into those straits which we saw our brother in, and would not afford him so much as our Prayers, may we not justly expect that the next time that we our selves are in straits, our consciences should take up a Parable and Taunting Proverb against us, and say as *Josephs* Brethren did, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear,

therefore is all this distress come upon us. And that which I would desire thee to beg of God for me is, That he would give me sincerely to aim at his Glory in all my actions, but especially those that belong to my Ministry, that I might not be as a broken vessel, and that he would give me greater Discoveries of, and love to himself and the Lord Jesus Christ; and that he would give me gifts, and strength, and wisdom, opportunity, and a heart to serve him, and mercies suitable to my wants, that my afflictions may be sanctified, my Temptations conquered, and my Corruptions mortified.

One thing more I am to request of thee, that is, to do what I know is too much neglected by my self, and I fear by others; Thou art to pray for a blessing upon thy self when thou readest this Treatise,
and

and that God would make it a blessing unto others also, into whose hands it shall come: I desire you that you would help me with your prayers in this particular; When we do but take our ordinary daily bread, we crave a blessing, how much more when we doe things that concern our eternal good? When we take a Book, to that end, Spiritually to benefit by it, do we think that it is in our own power, or in the power of any Treatise that we read, (without Gods assistance) to do us good? Nay, the Word of God it self is but a dead Letter, if the holy Spirit be absent when we hear or read it. But that thou shouldest desire a blessing upon thy self in reading of this book, is not all I request of thee, but that thou wouldest also extend thy Prayers further, even for others, that it may be also for their
edifi-

edification whosoever shall read
it; For as we are to pray that e-
very Sermon we hear may be for
the Spiritual advantage of others,
as well as of our selves ; It holds
also in reading of Treatises of De-
votion.

F I N I S:



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